

THE LUTHER LEAGUE OF AMERICA

High Ideals



PEN PALS

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High Ideals

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The Creeds of our Church

The Nicene Creed

The history and background of the Nicene Creed is much more definite than that of the Apostles' Creed. Actually, however, its name is misleading, as we soon shall see.

At the beginning of the fourth century A.D., a man named Arius had views concerning Christ that conflicted with the earlier teachings of the Christian Church.

second of a series



To Arius and his followers, Christ was simply a "good man." He wasn't divine at all. Naturally, the church had to clarify its belief that Christ was the Son of God and reject this new idea, so it called a meeting at Nicaea in 325. There a new creed had its birth. The years that followed were difficult for the church, because the new ideas of Arius gained so many followers. So in 381 another council was held at Constantinople and the Creed of Nicaea was changed in some respects. However, this new form was not officially approved by the church until 451 at Chalcedon.

Basically, this creed is an expansion of the Apostles' Creed. But phrases have been added to give a more exact statement of the Christian faith. By rejecting the ideas of Arius, the church asserted its firm faith in the full *divinity* of Christ.

Its uses are quite similar to those of the Apostles' Creed. For many years, it has been the major creed used in connection with the Lord's Supper, because it emphasizes the fact that God is in Christ. Little use has been made of the Nicene Creed as far as instruction is concerned but it has had tremendous influence as a rule and guide for our faith. As a basis for uniting the Christian Church throughout the world, it is far superior to the Apostles' Creed.

The Additions

The contents of the Nicene Creed need attention only insofar as they differ from those of the Apostles' Creed. The first article of each is very similar. The idea that God is the Creator is expanded in the words of *all things visible and invisible*. In other words, everything came into existence through the creative power of God.

The second article is much longer. That Christ was truly divine is stressed here (against the view of the Arians). We believe in *one Lord Jesus Christ*. He is the only Saviour. The phrases that fo

low point out that Christ is *true God*. He is holy as God is holy. Again, it is emphasized that Christ was also human and that He died for our sin. Notice that there is no statement concerning the descent into hell. However, the certain hope and enthusiasm of the church that Christ will come again is given more attention. Christ shall triumph; His *kingdom shall have no end*.

The third article speaks of our faith in the Holy Spirit and His work. He is the *Lord and giver of life*. He *proceeds* from the Father and the Son; that is, He shares all that has been said about God and Christ. He is to be worshipped and glorified. Also, it was the Holy Spirit who moved the holy men of God, called prophets, to tell of the glory of God. The phrase concerning the church calls attention to four characteristics of it—two more than are noted in the Apostles' Creed. That there is *one* church is an expression of its unity. It is also *apostolic* that is, it teaches the faith that Christ taught to His disciples. We also believe in *one* baptism for the remission of sins. Of course, we are certain that a person needs to be baptized only once, but that isn't the meaning here. "One" stresses the fact that only through Christian baptism can our sin be forgiven. There is also no doubt that there will be a resurrection of the dead and new "*life in the world to come*."

The Athanasian Creed

We have already noticed that the names of the other two creeds are not completely accurate. Here is another mistake! The Athanasian Creed has another name: "*Symbolum Quicunque*" from Latin, which means—*whosoever will be saved*. The creed begins with those words. "Athanasian" is the traditional name given because Athanasius of Alexandria was thought to have been the author.

We have seen that in the early church, a creed was a confession of faith used very often in connection with baptism. However, the "*Symbolum Quicunque*" (Athanasian Creed) was originally a song about the doctrines of the church? None of the early records even call it a creed!

It became so well-known and so widely used, however, that by the thirteenth century it became a "creed" of the church. In the strictest sense, then, this creed is not only not Athanasian, but it is not even a creed. The actual date of its writing, its author or authors, and its birthplace are all in question even today.

Obviously, as we have already pointed out, the main use of the creed has been in the liturgy of the church. The Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England use it quite often in their worship, but our Lutheran Church does not. However, we do use it as a guide and rule of our faith. It has been considered so important that it has been included in the Book of Concord, which contains the most important doctrines of our church.

Two Parts

The Athanasian Creed has two main parts. The first deals with the Trinity, and the second with our beliefs concerning Christ. The second part is only about half as long as the first. Both parts, however, open and close with a statement that the faith expressed in the creed is necessary for our salvation.

Part one emphasizes the fact that God is One in Three Persons. We have already talked about this. Concerning the Persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit)—they are equal in every respect—in glory, in eternity, in being immeasurable and almighty. None is above the others; each of the persons is truly God. Everything we say about the Father applies to His Son and the Spirit!

There are many big words in the Athanasian Creed, some of which deserve our special attention. God, we confess, is *incomprehensible*. That means that He has no limits; He is beyond all that we can imagine; no one can ever fully understand all that there is to know about Him.

The second part of the creed, in discussing Christ, points out that our Lord was both divine and human—He had two *natures*. This section had to be made clear because some people said that Christ

(continued on page 47)



*this could happen
in your neighborhood*

by FRANCES NALL

LOOK, Mom. The moving van is leaving. The Uphams will be gone in a minute," Jim Higgins called from his post at the living room window.

"Am I ever glad!" his mother called back from the kitchen. "Maybe we can take the fence down if there aren't three boys next door to chase through my flower beds."

Jim laughed. "Dad's turning the corner," he called. His mother started carrying in the salads.

A minute later Jim knew something was wrong. His father slammed shut the front door, slapped his paper down on the hall table, and strode through the living room without speaking to him.

Jim snapped off the TV. He heard his father's angry voice from the kitchen. "Who do you think bought the Upham house?" he shouted.

"Who?" His mother's voice was soothing.

"Negroes!" Mr. Higgins put all the outrage and anger he felt into his voice. "That Upham sold to a Negro!" Jim's father was so angry he couldn't talk for a minute. "A fine neighbor he was!"

Jim had some Negro classmates at school, and some of them were good friends of his. He wondered why his father was so worried about these new neighbors.

"Calm down," he heard his mother say. "There's nothing you can do about it."

Through the doorway Jim saw his father thrust a platter of roast beef into his

PAINT AND ROSES

father's hand. "Let's eat our dinner before it gets cold," she said.

As they sat down to dinner, Mr. Higgins bowed his head for the prayer. After the blessing he continued sputtering. "Nothing I can do about it?" he said. "I will do something about it. I won't have the value of my property go down. And I won't move out of the house where I've lived all my life."

Jim ate his dinner as fast as possible so he could go tell the big news to Ben Simonds, who lived next door on the other side. When Jim asked to be excused, his father scowled at him. "Where are you going?" he asked.

"Over to Ben's," Jim replied.

"Well, all right, but if there are any boys in that family that's moving next door, you aren't going to have anything to do with them. Hear?"

"Yes, sir," said Jim and hurried out the back door.

Outside Jim yelled to Ben who was tinkering with his bike.

"Guess what's happened!" Jim shouted as soon as Ben was within earshot. "A Negro family bought the Upham house. Is my pop mad! He says he's lived here all of his life and he's not going to move. And he won't live next door to Negroes either!"

"Well, what is he going to do then?" Ben demanded.

"I don't know," Jim shrugged his shoulders.

Short, stocky Ben looked up at Jim. "You know, I heard a Negro family was moving in on the other side of the street, too."

"Wait till Pop hears that," said Jim.

Ben was puzzled. "At school I like the Negro boys in our class. Take Thad—"

"That's right," Jim interrupted. "He's the best pitcher our junior high ever had—he's first violinist in our orchestra—

and he's about the smartest kid in our class." Jim scratched his red head, trying to figure it out. "Maybe my pop just never had a chance to know any Negroes."

Just then Jim's father interrupted the conversation by calling, "You come in now, Jim, and get your homework done."

The next morning on the way to junior high, the boys caught up with Joyce and Eloise who lived on their street. "My mother says if a Negro family moves in our block," Eloise was saying, "she won't stay there, not even for one night. She'd be scared to death."

"Why?" Joyce asked. "We have Negro boys and girls in our school."

"That's different from living next door to them," Joyce retorted.

When they reached the baseball diamond and Jim and Ben turned to cut across the field, Thad Brown raced up to them, grinning. "Guess what?" he said. "We're finally moving out of that dark old flat. My folks have bought an eight-room house on Eighty-fourth Street. Now I can have a room of my own, and so can Chipper. Dad can have an office at home, too." Thad was so excited that he did not notice that Jim and Ben had little to say. Just inside the door, Thad left them. "So long, I've got orchestra rehearsal," he said.

Jim and Ben looked at each other. Finally Ben said quietly, "I'll bet Thad's folks are moving next to you!"

"His father's a skin specialist," said Jim. "My mother went to him when she had a skin infection last fall."

Ben nodded. Then Jim said, "It'd be nice having Thad next door. If my pop

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only would—" He looked at Ben in despair. "What can we do?"

The news had spread by noon. Jim worried about the snatches of conversation he heard on the playground. Star second baseman, Larry Johnson, pounded his right fist into the pocket of his glove and announced, "We're moving next week. My dad's bought a house on Eighty-fifth Street."

"So has my dad. On Eighty-fourth Street," Tom Herrold said. "We've been crowded in Central District long enough."

"You may be sorry," Bill Adams warned. "Some of the people there have it in for Negroes."

Tom looked serious, "I know," he said, "but it's a chance my dad says we must take. He wants to live in a better neighborhood."

When the bell rang for afternoon classes, Jim was relieved. He wasn't sure what he thought about it all. Things he hadn't thought much about had a way of coming to a head all of a sudden. Then he had to make up his mind one way or the other. In the library during study period, Jim tried to make up his mind about this. His father was head of the official board at the church. He thought he was doing right. Jim knew that. How could anything change his father's attitude? Especially his son?

On the way home from school Jim told Ben, "I've decided I'm glad Thad is going to live on our street."

"Me, too," Ben agreed. "But how about your pop?"

"He won't like it. He's got his mind made up already," Jim said.

The next day was moving day on Eighty-fourth Street. Excitement grew as four Negro families moved in. After school Jim watched the Browns arrive and the men on the moving van unload their furniture. Jim's father had forbidden him to go out of the house or to speak to anyone in the new family next door.

"Gee, I'd like to go over and help Thad," Jim said to his mother as he watched him working on Chipper's sandbox.

His mother looked worried. "I know,

Jim, but you heard your father. He'll settle down after a while. He—"

Jim knew why his mother was worried. His father had gone to talk with some of the men in the neighborhood.

At seven o'clock Jim left for his Scout meeting at the church. "I wonder," said Jim as he and Ben strolled the half block "if Thad could join our Scout troop."

"He'd make a good Scout," Ben answered.

They were the first to arrive at the church. Jim tried to tell the Scoutmaster, Bob Keiter, how he felt about the new families moving into their block. "I'm glad Thad's going to live next door," he said, "but my dad doesn't like it a bit."

"Why shouldn't they live in our block, Bob?" asked Ben. The Scoutmaster was "Bob" to all the Scouts.

"There's no real reason why they shouldn't," Bob replied. "The Browns, the Johnsons, the Herrolds, and the MacDonalds will all be assets to this neighborhood. Dr. Brown is well known all over the city. Mr. Herrold and Mr. Johnson are fine lawyers, and Mr. MacDonald owns the big garage on Eighty-fourth Street. He's the best automobile man in this part of the city."

The talk swirled around the new Negro families. "The Scouts don't all think alike," Jim whispered to Ben.

"They talk just like their parents do," Ben said.

"I don't," Jim denied.

Ben shrugged his shoulders.

Just then the Reverend Dean Short, the youthful minister of the church, arrived to talk with the Scouts about some church plans.

But the boys couldn't talk about anything except their new neighbors. "I'd like to have Thad join our troop," Jim proposed.

"Me, too," said Ben.

"Not me." Don glared at Jim. "I'd like to rotten egg all those Negroes out of our block." A few of the boys agreed, but most of them just listened.

Loud-voiced Don asked Mr. Short, "Are you going to let your Jeanie play with Chipper Brown?"

Everyone turned to look intently at the minister.

"If Jeanie wants to play with Chipper on her slide and swing, it will be all right with me," he replied.

Don said something under his breath, and two or three boys close to him nodded in agreement.

"Mr. Short is right," Ben said matter-of-factly. "Why shouldn't Chipper play with Jeanie if he's a nice kid?"

"If he's as nice as his brother, he's nicer than some other kids who have lived in this block," Jim said, thinking of the three destructive Upham boys.

The Scouts went home with the minister's words stirring their thoughts. "Be Christian," Mr. Short had told them. "Treat these new families just as you'd treat any other new neighbors."

When Jim turned in at his house, he looked up at Thad's room. The house was dark. Thad's new red bike was standing under the maple tree in the yard.

"That you, Jim?" he heard his father call.

"Yeah," Jim answered. "Shall I snap the night lock?"

"No, I'll lock up," his father replied.

"O.K.," Jim said. The last thought he had before he went to sleep was about how he could show Thad he was still his friend.

When Jim woke the next morning, he ran to his window. Thad's bedroom was right across from his, and he wanted to see if he was up. For a minute Jim thought he must still be asleep and having a nightmare. The house next door, so glossy and white the night before, was smeared with streaks of red, yellow, and black paint. The Browns were nowhere in sight. Jim looked at the back yard. Chipper's sandbox, which Thad and his dad had moved so carefully, was filled with tar and feathers. The front wheel of Thad's new bike had been bent and the bike tossed on the front porch.

Jim flopped back on his bed and buried his head in his pillows. "How could anyone do such a terrible thing?" he moaned. He finally got dressed and went downstairs. His father was sitting in the break-

fast nook. Jim started to go out of the kitchen door.

"Where are you going?" his father growled.

"Outside." Jim looked at his father, and his eyes were angry, too.

His father's eyes met his without flinching, then he barked, "You sit down and eat." He saw Jim looking out the window. "That should teach them," he said defiantly. "It's their fault for trying to move into a white neighborhood." He looked at Jim. "And I don't want to see you playing with that Negro boy or visiting his family. Hear?"

Jim nodded and looked at his father. Jim still felt sort of sick all over, and it showed in his eyes. His father looked at him for just a second with a glimmer of the same kind of feeling in his eyes. All at once Jim knew his father hadn't helped smear those houses and that his dad didn't really like the paint daubs any better than he did. His father didn't approve of violence either. Jim felt better.

After breakfast Jim and Ben got on their bikes and rode around the block. All four of the homes Negro families had moved into the day before were daubed with paint.

"Isn't it awful?" Jim demanded.

"Sure is," Ben responded.

Jim looked up and down the block. The streets were empty. No children played in the yards. At last Jim and Ben went inside, too.

The next morning when Jim and his parents walked the half block to the church, Jim glanced quickly at the Browns' house. Snowy white curtains were at each window. Mr. Higgins saw Jim's quick glance and said in a low voice, "They may move into our block, but none of them will ever get into our church."

Jim wanted to ask his father if a Christian church is just for white people. But there was no use starting a quarrel on the way to church. So Jim kept his rebellion smoldering inside him.

At Sunday school everything seemed the same as usual. Kimi, the Japanese-American girl, Ben, Bill, and the rest

were there.

The church service seemed more impressive than usual, and for some reason there was a larger congregation. Jim was proud when his father sang the offertory solo, "In Christ There Is No East or West." He made you feel the words were true.

Mr. Short rose to preach. He talked about the work their church was doing in Africa. He read a letter from the young Negro pastor whom the church was helping to support. He praised the church members, especially the official board, for their Christian concern for the Negroes of Africa.

Then Mr. Short began the second part of his sermon which he called "Missions on Our Block." He reminded the people that the church had Negroes right in its own block who were trying to give their children a better place in which to grow up. He said, "The church must be an example of Christian love for all peoples East and West, in Africa and America, on both sides of the boulevard."

Jim looked at his father. His face was getting as red as his hair.

Then the minister paused a moment and looked slowly at his congregation, row by row. Some of the people shifted uneasily in their seats. Then he spoke in a low, even voice. "Early tomorrow morning, instead of having our weekly meeting, the ministers in this part of the city are meeting at the Brown house, half a block from this church. We plan to repaint the house until it is as white as it was Friday afternoon. You are all invited to join us. Come in overalls and bring a paint brush and a ladder if you can. After the Brown house is finished, we plan to repaint the Herrold, the MacDonald, and the Johnson homes."

He stood there quietly a moment and then lifted his hand for the benediction. As the minister walked quietly down the aisle toward the door, Jim glanced at his father. He looked grim and determined. Instead of greeting people after church as he usually did, he hurried out the side door.

As Jim walked up the aisle, he heard

an indignant old man sputter, "I'm going to take my letter to First Church."

Bill Adams' father looked almost as angry as Mr. Higgins. "They'll be taking in Negroes as church members next," he said.

When Jim and Ben were walking home, Ben said, "My dad doesn't like Negroes either. Do you suppose our fathers—they—?"

"No," said Jim quickly. "I'm sure they didn't know anything about the paint until they woke up and saw it."

Ben looked relieved.

The next morning Jim and Ben stopped for a few minutes on their way to school to watch five men carrying ladders and buckets of white paint to the Brown house. When they came home from school with Thad, several others had joined the original quintet. They had almost covered the paint smears.

The hurt look in Thad's eyes troubled Jim, and he put his arm across Thad's shoulders and said, "Come on, let's help if we can."

Thad smiled and nodded. The three boys approached Mr. Short, whose blue overalls were splashed with paint. He was sandpapering some yellow paint on the front door.

"Can we help?" Jim asked.

"Sure." The minister smiled and turned over the job he was doing to them.

They were still working when Jim's father came by. When Mr. Short saw how Mr. Higgins glared at his son, he went over to the boys and said, "I think that's O.K. now. Maybe it should be quitting time for you three."

When they stopped work, Thad said, "Thanks," and went into the house. The minister walked to the sidewalk with Jim and Ben.

As they stood together looking at the house, Jim asked, "How much is this painting going to help? Some people in the neighborhood still don't want Negroes here. It won't change how they feel."

"That's true," the young minister replied. "Our real job is bigger than this one, and it will take longer. Remember

what we talked about at Scout meeting last Friday night? We've got to show the neighborhood that people are the same inside whether their skins are dark or light. They have the same feelings and ambitions."

"It won't be easy," Jim said, thinking of his father.

"No, it won't be easy," the minister said. "Being a Christian isn't easy."

When Jim went into the house, his father was waiting for him. "I want you to stay out of this from now on. Hear!"

Courage surged into Jim. "Look, Pop," he said. "Thad is my friend. We are in classes together at school. We play on the baseball team together. You don't even know him. I'm going to keep on being friends with Thad." He started upstairs to his room. Behind him he heard his father sputtering. Jim knew he was terribly angry.

Mrs. Higgins rushed into the hall. "Now, look here," she said firmly to her husband. "Jim's right. He knows Thad. And Dr. Brown is a fine man. Last fall he helped me when no one else could. There's no reason why Jim and Thad should not be friends."

"All right," he heard his father say, "but don't expect me to have anything to do with the Browns, and don't let Jim invite that boy into this house."

When Jim came home from school the next day, he stopped to see Mr. Short at the MacDonald's house where he was painting over the black smears. Some of the other church people were working on the Herrolds' house, and Mr. Johnson himself was helping the group repaint his house.

Jim told the minister how he had defied his father the night before and what had happened. "You've got a tough problem, Jim," the minister said. "Do what you think is right. But remember your father believes he's right, too. Pray for him and also for courage to do the right thing. It's a tall order. It will take a lot of Christian living to heal the hurts inflicted this week."

By Wednesday all of the houses had been repainted. Nothing else will hap-

pen, Jim told himself. But the next morning on the way to school he was amazed to see that Jeanie Short's slide and swing had been torn down during the night.

"Look," Ben shouted. "How could anyone do that?"

"The minister hasn't done anything except to help the Negro families," Jim said.

Just then Mr. Short came out of the house. "We'll come over after school tonight and fix Jeanie's slide and swing," Jim offered.

The following Sunday Mr. Short preached again on "Missions in Our Block." A few more members were absent the next Sunday; two more threatened to leave the church.

Since the church was small, its financial income was dangerously reduced by the time the new year arrived. It was then that Mr. Short told his congregation that the national board of missions had heard about the plight of the church and had decided to help the church financially. "We are now a mission church," announced Mr. Short. "We must not fail to live up to the teachings of Jesus about all men being brothers."

During a Scout meeting soon after Christmas, Jim suggested that the troop invite Thad to join.

Don shouted, "If that Negro joins, I'll leave this troop."

"You don't make sense," Jim told him. "You play in the orchestra with Thad. You sit next to him in English. Why not be in Scouts with him? He's a swell fellow."

"I just don't want to be, that's all there is to it," Don said sharply.

"Aw, go on," Bill Adams said. "I'm for having him in."

Thad was invited to join the troop, and he accepted. Within a few months Larry Johnson and Tom Herrold also took the Scout oath. And Don decided not to leave.

Gradually the feeling against the four Negro families began to die down. Jim smiled when one day he overheard his father say to his mother, "You know that Negro boy next door is really better be-

haved than some of the other boys on this street."

By the end of January, Jim's father no longer objected if Thad joined Jim and Ben to study for a test. Once he and Ben had gone to Thad's house. At Scout meeting Jim suggested that the four Negro boys join their Sunday school class. "Almost all the Scout troop comes," Jim urged. When the boys appeared the next Sunday and no one said a word about it, Jim wanted to whoop for joy.

During Lent the minister suggested to the eighth graders that they might like to join the church membership class. On the way home Jim asked Thad, "You'll join, won't you?"

"I don't know," Thad said. "I wouldn't want to belong to a church that my parents couldn't join."

Jim was honest. "Maybe if you join now, your folks could someday, too."

"I'll think about it," Thad promised. "But there are lots of Sundays my mother can't go to church because there's no bus connection to our old church in Central District."

Not long after that, Mr. Short talked with his official board about the great progress that had been made in neighborhood relations. "Maybe the next step is to invite the new families to join the church," he said.

"We've done enough to accept them in the neighborhood," Mr. Higgins flared. "This is our church, not theirs."

But Mr. Short only remarked quietly, "It's their community, too."

At Easter time Thad was accepted into church membership along with the rest of the class.

"I wonder," Jim asked Ben on the way home, "if my father would still object to having Dr. and Mrs. Brown transfer their membership to our church."

"Better not say anything about that yet" was Ben's reply.

Jim waited. In the spring his father's big interest was roses. He had always dreamed of the day when he would have a rose garden. With the Upham children next door, his efforts had always ended in failure.

One day Jim saw Dr. Brown out in the yard planting a rose bush. A few days later he saw his father at the fence showing Dr. Brown a rose bush and looking at one the doctor was getting ready to plant.

When his father came in to dinner, he said, "You know, Dr. Brown has always wanted to have a rose garden, too."

A few days later Mr. Higgins even smiled when Jim screwed up his courage and said, "Dad, if it's all right for Thad to belong to our church, don't you think his folks should belong, too?"

He expected to hear his dad start sputtering, but he hesitated only a minute. "Well," he said, "I suppose maybe it might be a good idea." He turned to his wife. "Have you gotten acquainted with Mrs. Brown yet?"

"Yes," Mrs. Higgins said demurely, looking at her husband. "Now and then she brings Chipper over for ten o'clock coffee."

Mr. Higgins started to glare at his wife, and then he smiled instead. "Behind my back!" he said. After a minute he added, "But I'm not sure I want to know any other Negroes."

In June when the Boy Scouts were trying to find a good place to hold a Fourth of July picnic for their parents, Mr. Higgins suggested, "Why don't you hold it in our back yard? Dr. Brown and I have been talking. If we knock down that fence, we can combine our rose gardens. Without the fence, the two back yards would make a fine place for the picnic."

The Scout troop liked the idea. When Dr. Brown agreed with Mr. Higgins, the Scouts volunteered to tear down the fence. Thad and Jim worked side by side, and Jim smiled broadly when he overheard his father say to Dr. Brown, "There goes one more barrier."

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Dramatize the story. Keep stage setting and props very simple because you will have several scenes. Follow the topic with discussion and a survey of racial problems in your community. Perhaps the prejudice in your community is against Jews or Italians or Chinese.



RECREATION or WRECKREATION

*how will your league
spend Halloween?*

by DELORES RUGE

HALLOWEEN comes on the Church festival of the Reformation and on the eve of All Saints Day. The purpose of all Saints Day (November 1st) is to commemorate all who have given their lives in service to the church. October 31st is important in the Protestant Church because it was on this date that Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five Theses to the church door at Wittenberg, and it was this act that started the Protestant Reformation. Even though Halloween comes so close to two church festivals, it appears to be a carry over of some non-Christian practices.

The traditional activities of ghosts, witches, bobbing for apples, etc., were in practice in Ireland, England, and in some places in Europe before the first missionaries (Patrick, Augustine, etc.) reached these countries. The church tried to replace the pagan festivals with religious services but was not successful.

Halloween activities did not get started in the United States until the latter 1800's. Around 1840 there was a large migration from Ireland to the states. Halloween was a popular custom among these people and they brought it with them. It did not take long for Halloween to work its way into the customs of Americans.

As Halloween became popular in the United States, many of the activities developed into pranks and destructive acts which have caused property owners and many city officials much concern. Today planned parties and supervised activities are encouraged in the majority of our communities.

Luther Leaguers can plan a church-related Halloween party. Of course, it wouldn't be Halloween without the traditional games and stunts, but add a little variety this year. With two church festivals as inspiration, there's a place for learning or service—or both. Here are some suggestions to start your thinking.

HALLOWEEN AND THE REFORMATION

Since Halloween and Reformation share the same day, use the witches and goblins to promote a review of some of your church history. (Use curious witches, ghosts, or black cats on your posters and announcements.)

Make displays of pipe cleaner people to suggest various events in church history, such as Martin Luther nailing his Theses on the church door, the burning of the Papal order, and others. When the Leaguers arrive they can go around and name these various events, thereby testing their knowledge of church history (and your art work too.)

Search your Confirmation book and old Sunday School books and make a quiz to see how well their memory is working.

HALLOWEEN AND SERVICE

Since Halloween comes on the eve of All Saints Day and All Saints Day was set aside to commemorate those who have served the church, what better occasion than one of service to the church, or the community itself.

Look around your community. Is there a children's home, home for aged, rest home, hospital, or other institution where people are spending long, lonely days? Make arrangements with the director of the institution to help brighten their lives. Perhaps you could make and put up some decorations; perhaps you can give them a party.

TO THE AGED

It is really fun to do something for some of our aged people, for often they are forgotten by family and friends and are very lonely. They appreciate someone giving them some time and attention. If there is a home for aged near you, check with the director, then make posters about your party for the home and take the guests invitations several days in advance, so they can be looking forward to it. Check with the person in charge to see what the guests like to do and plan to include as many as possible in the games and fun.

The guests who are able to be up and around will enjoy some of the less strenuous relay games, like catching apples and pop corn balls on the string. Some brain testers can be fun and will let even those who can not do the more active games take part. Our older people love to sing and enjoy many of the *old* favorites.

IN YOUR OLD CLOTHES

This Halloween might be a good time to get into your old jeans and do some painting, repairing, or cleaning around the church.

TO LUTHERAN WORLD ACTION

Your League could get the fall L.W.A. clothing drive started by going on a scavenger hunt for clothes. Be sure to publicize this through your local paper and church bulletins so people will have the things ready when you come.

TO YOUR CHURCH AND YOUR COMMUNITY

Does your church have a pantry of food stuffs for emergencies in the community? This might be time when you

can replenish the supply. Publicize your project in the community paper with a list of the items most needed. You can use your Luther League membership cards for identification, if this is desirable.

TO YOUR COMMUNITY

Offer your services to your community leaders for the morning after Halloween. Go out early in the morning to wash windows that have been soaped, fix signs that have been damaged or moved, and to do other acts of "cleaning up" after Halloween pranksters. After you have covered your area, you could return to the church for a group breakfast.

PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS

The purpose of this topic is to give you an idea of the origin of Hallowe'en, and to stimulate your thinking about how you could do something constructive this Hallowe'en.

Anything you do should have lots of planning, so be sure to begin early.

Begin from two to four weeks ahead of the day by having an "early bird" program on Hallowe'en. Discuss what past Hallowe'ens have been like in your community and what the leaguers can do to make this one something special.

Bring in the fact that Reformation comes at the same time and tell them a little about All Saints Day. Make suggestions. When the group has decided what it wants to do, appoint committees for the program, worship, games, decorations, and refreshments.

WORSHIP SUGGESTIONS

Worship is a vital part of all our Luther League activities. Your worship service for your program Hallowe'en night will be guided by what your group decides to do. Probably a simple and informal worship will be most impressive for this evening. Some suggested scripture lessons are Matthew 5:1-12, John 2:13-17, I Peter 1:22-25 and Psalm 46. Use hymns suggesting service such as *We would be Building Temples Still Undone, Living For Jesus* or hymns of praise such as *Now Thank We All Our God* or *Praise to the Lord*.

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A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

reformation topic

by ANNE MILLER

ANNOUNCER: This is Television Station ULCA, presenting YESTERDAY AND TODAY. We bring you a glimpse of the past and a view of the present. We take you to sixteenth century Germany for a look at Martin Luther and the Reformation. We show you how he taught the church to sing. We show you how Luther's hymns are sung today. And now—YESTERDAY AND TODAY.

RECORDING: "A Mighty Fortress" from such record albums as the following: "Mighty Fortress" by Robert Shaw Chorale Victor LM 2199.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES: (As strains of the music die out): Yesterday the church did not sing. Today it does. Have you ever wondered why? Go back with me into the past. Until a little more than 400 years ago common people did not sing at all in church. The music was produced only by priests or by specially

selected choirs. And of course, the service, songs and all, were in Latin. Most of the people could not understand them.

When the Protestant Reformation came, things changed. Hymns were written in the every-day language of the people, for use in their worship. Martin Luther, the leader of the Reformation in Germany and the father of the Lutheran Church, was the greatest leader in this.

As a boy, Luther showed talent in music. He could play the lute and flute, and he was an excellent singer. At Christmas, he and his friends went wandering through neighboring villages, singing carols. In fact, it was much the way we do today.

It is not surprising, then, that in later life Luther wanted to encourage his congregation to sing. "I wish," he said, "to compose sacred hymns, so that the Word of God may dwell among the people also by means of songs."

He translated the Bible for the people into their own language. Then he gave them hymns, so that, as he said, they could "read God's word and speak to Him in their songs." The Protestant services were no longer in Latin, but in the language of the people.

There is an interesting story of how Luther came to write his first hymn. The year before, two youths had been burned at the stake for professing the new faith. They had died bravely, singing as the

flames leaped higher and higher. In honor of them, Luther composed his first hymn.

The first Protestant hymnal appeared in Wittenberg, Germany, in 1524. It contained only eight hymns. Four of them were by Luther. Soon it "flew all over Europe," for it gave people what they needed. The words told of the people's new-found faith. The music was beautiful. The hymns were eagerly learned. We even read of musicians' playing them from the church steeples, and of crowds singing them in the markets. In one place a man was imprisoned for singing the new songs, but the villagers rose up and demanded his release.

It was a little like our pep rallies before football games, except that the people were singing Christian hymns.

Many other hymnals appeared. Within twenty years, at least 117 collections of hymns by Luther and his helpers had been printed. Someone said the country became a "Sea of Song." Everyone was singing the new hymns. If there had been a "Hit Parade" in their day, they would have been the top seven songs.

From this you can see why Luther became known as the "Father of Congregational Singing." Some men feel that he did as much for the Reformation by his hymns as he did by his translating the Bible and preaching.

Luther's greatest hymn was "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." He wrote both the words and music, about 1529.

Now, in our look at yesterday, we shall see how this great hymn came to be written.

FIRST SPEAKER: HOW IT HAPPENED:

Have you ever had a blue day. Have you ever felt things weren't working out right for you? There were dark days in Martin Luther's life also. For them, he found help in looking to God as his fortress and strength.

But let me tell it to you from the beginning.

Martin Luther was a Roman Catholic priest and a professor. He loved God, but he disliked some of the practices of

the church. He felt they were not right. He thought men had begun them, not God. He knew they were not mentioned in the Bible.

One of the things he hated was the practice of selling "indulgences." People thought of them as official forgivenesses for sins, and they were sold whenever the church needed money. Luther believed a man lived by faith, and could not buy forgiveness.

There were many other things which Luther thought should be reformed, but this was the one which caused all the trouble. In 1516, a man named Tetzel came through Luther's part of Germany selling "indulgences," and Luther could not keep still about it.

So, bravely, he wrote out his famous Ninety-five Theses and nailed them to the door of the church in Wittenberg. Theses are statements of doctrine, or belief. They contained Luther's ideas about what was wrong in the church.

Today, we don't nail notices to church doors, but in his time, such was the method of presenting views on which you invited debate. This was done on October 31, 1517, one of the most important dates in history.

Tetzel burned Luther's theses to show the people what he thought of them. He wrote a reply. Then the students in Wittenberg burned the reply. The quarrel spread, and other scholars joined in. People became very excited about it all.

Finally, the Pope heard about it. He decided Luther was wrong and excommunicated him. That means, he put him out of the church. He also told the Emperor Charles V to see that the order was obeyed.

Charles V was not a man to obey anyone, even the Pope, unless it pleased him. So, he decided to hold a Diet, or Council, at Worms and call Luther before him. There Charles and the Council would decide if Luther were guilty of disobedience and heresy. Heresy means holding opinions against those of the church.

Luther's friends were fearful. Worms was full of the enemies of Luther. Who

could even be sure that the Emperor would keep his promise of safe-guarding his stay? They tried to persuade Luther not to go.

He was not afraid. He told them, "I would go to Worms, if there were as many devils as slates on the roofs."

At the Diet of Worms, Luther would not change his views. Since he would not recant, the church said he was guilty of heresy. This meant that the followers of Luther would have to split off from the Catholic Church altogether. This was in 1521.

From Worms, Luther had to go into hiding at the Castle of Wartburg. For a time his followers did not know where he was. He spent his time translating the Bible into German, and producing simple, beautiful hymns for the people to sing.

All the time Luther was at Wartburg the tremendous thing he had started kept growing. The Protestant movement now spread through whole nations.

It was natural that trouble should develop between Protestants and Catholics. In 1529 the Emperor called a Council at Augsburg to hear both sides. It was during the dark days awaiting this Council that Luther wrote the words and music of his great hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." He and his followers marched to Augsburg singing it. He often sang it while the Diet was in session. The hymn told all hearers that the singers feared no man, but put their complete faith in God, their fortress and strength. The German name of the hymn is "Ein Feste Burg," and is often spoken of by that name.

It was in this year, 1529, that the followers of Luther were first called "Protestants."

The Council at Augsburg made clear the beliefs of those who followed Luther. The "Augsburg Confession" which came from it is still the basis of the Lutheran Church Theology.

A few years later the Protestants were granted some rights in Germany.

"A Mighty Fortress" has been called the "Marching Song of the Reformation." People responded to it the way we do to

"The Star Spangled Banner." Everyone in Protestant Germany sang it—children at play, women at their work, and soldiers on the battlefield.

ANNOUNCER: That is how this hymn came to be written—yesterday. What did it mean yesterday? What does it mean today? For the answer to that question, let us go to our next speaker.

SECOND SPEAKER: WHAT IT MEANS:

We know that Luther based his new service on the Bible. He kept from the Catholic Mass those parts that were in the Scriptures and discarded the rest. His hymns also were inspired by Biblical texts. Now let us hear Psalm 46, from which Luther took the ideas for his hymn, "A Mighty Fortress."

(Read the Psalm)

Now let us hear the hymn.

(Have a soloist sing "A Mighty Fortress," number 150 in the "Service Book and Hymnal," or have the entire group sing it.)

For his basis, Luther used a Latin translation of the Bible. As you can see, he did not write his hymn to follow, thought by thought, that of the Psalm. He used great freedom in developing the ideas. Someone has said this hymn is "rugged words set to majestic tones marshalling the embattled hosts of heaven."

Luther, knowing about fortresses and castles in his native Germany, saw God as a great unfailing refuge in any storm. He knew, through his own experience that man could rely on God, and God alone for help.

To Luther, the Devil was a personal enemy. This was the Prince of Darkness, grim and threatening, to be overcome by God's truth. All this Luther put into the hymn.

These lessons are as meaningful for us today as they were for the Germans of Luther's day. We have no enemies threatening us, such as those Luther had. But we do have doubts and lack of faith to overcome. We are not called upon, as Luther thought he might be, to "let goods and kindred go." However, God does call

us, each one of us, to give up our own selfish ideas and interests and give our lives to His service. As we come to trust more and more on God's love, we too can say, with great conviction, "His kingdom is forever."

"Ein Feste Burg" was one of the watchwords of the Reformation. It cheered armies to conflict. It strengthened believers in hours of fiery trial. It is just as forceful today. It can strengthen us as individuals. It can sustain God's church as it faces the evils of this world.

Not only the words, but also the music both display Luther's greatness. Sometimes Luther set words to existing tunes the people knew. As he once said, "The devil has no right to all the good tunes." For this hymn, however, he composed both words and music.

The translation used in our new *Service Book and Hymnal* is by Dr. Frederick Henry Hedge. He was a native of Mass. and was formerly a minister of the Unitarian Church.

ANNOUNCER: Yesterday is passed. Today is upon us. What is the place of this work of Dr. Martin Luther in the world today?

THIRD SPEAKER: TODAY:

The teachings of Luther were not for his followers only, but for all people. The hymns of Luther were not for German Protestants only. In fact, "A Mighty Fortress" is one of the greatest contributions to Christian hymnody. It is included in the hymnals of all the major denominations.

When groups of Lutheran Students assemble in their meetings called *Assemblies*, they sing it, even though they sing different words because they come from different branches of Lutheranism.

It is sung with great feeling at the great meetings of the Lutheran World Federation.

Bach, the greatest composer who has ever lived, was a Lutheran. He used "Ein Feste Burg" as the theme of one of his best loved cantatas.

In 1892 Mendelssohn was in a carriage accident in London. While he nursed a

lame knee, he composed his "Reformation Symphony." He wrote it in honor of the 300th Anniversary of the Augsburg Confession. You remember, it was for this Council that Luther wrote "A Mighty Fortress." The theme of the hymn is included in the last movement of Mendelssohn's work.

(If possible, play a recording of this movement.)

The melody of the hymn also was used with effectiveness in Meyerbeer's work about the French Protestants.

But still more important, it holds a place in the thoughts of all who sing it. It helps us to become Marching Protestants today, just as it did the people of Luther's day.

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Purpose of this Program: 1) To help Leaguers know more about the Reformation, as it is seen in the story of Luther's greatest hymn, and 2) To help them apply its lessons to their own lives.

Plan your program well. Leave nothing to chance. Be certain that all participants have their material well in advance, so that they are familiar with it.

If possible, have a picture of Luther prominently displayed in the meeting room.

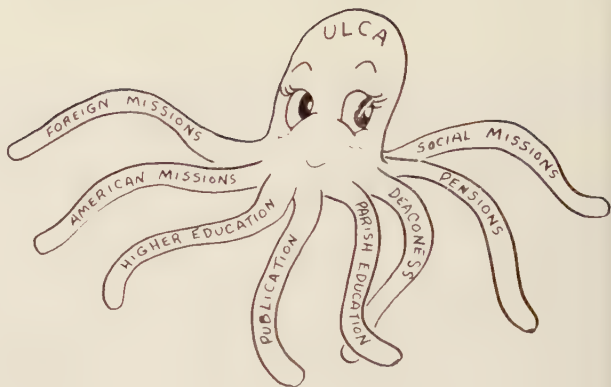
Place a table in the front of the room, with the Announcer seated in the center and the three Speakers and the Master of Ceremonies grouped around it. Speakers may remain seated if they wish, since the program is in the nature of a round table discussion. If they do read their material, they should read it well. Have them practice several times, and look up any unfamiliar words.

The Opening Worship Service might be simple, since both a Psalm and a Hymn are included in the program. It might include the hymn "Now Thank We All Our God," No. 443 in the *Service Book and Hymnal*; Psalm 95, page 197, SBH; and Prayer 10, page 219, SBH.

If at all possible, make use of the recordings suggested in the program. If the records named are not available, attempt to find substitutes. Have someone trained to operate the record player, so there are no long pauses.

And remember, the effectiveness of the program, and its helpfulness to your listeners, depend largely upon you.

THE OUTREACHING ARMS OF OUR CHURCH



*a study of the Boards
of the ULCA and
what they do for us.*

I

American Missions

THE Board of American Missions is the instrument of the Church in carrying out the Great Commission in Canada, the United States and its possessions. It is responsible for organizing new congregations and assisting other congregations that are in special need. It also assists congregations in the securing of

parsonages, lots and church buildings through loans from church extension funds provided by the giving of our congregations to apportionment.

Our population is growing at the rate of 3,000,000 people a year.

30,000,000 people, or one out of five in the United States, move each year.

More than 1,000,000 homes are erected each year.

There are more than 75,000,000 unchurched people in the United States and Canada.

Large suburban communities are growing up around our cities.

Churches are needed. Congregations must be organized. The Board of American Missions makes these possible.

The Board of 21 members works through *divisions* to carry out its program.

1. The Division of Survey and Research. This division is responsible for studying new communities to determine if there is a need for organizing a congregation. Approximately 100 communities are surveyed each year. Surveyors go from house to house to determine the number of unchurched. This division is also responsible for urban work and makes studies of city congregations located in changing neighborhoods and if help is needed recommends the amount needed. It also gives guidance and provides parish workers to help these congregations serve their communities.

2. The Division of English Missions is responsible for the development of new

congregations and assists congregations until self-support. Approximately 500 receive salary aid each year. In 1956 ninety new congregations were organized and in 1957 there were 65.

3. The Division of Special Missions is responsible for reaching people where other languages than English are used. The Gospel is proclaimed in 14 different languages through this division.

4. The Division of Finance is responsible for more than \$13,000,000 of Church Extension funds loaned out for parsonages, lots and church buildings. This money is loaned to mission congregations at a low rate of interest and approximately 10% is returned each year to be loaned out again.

5. The Division of Church Extension is responsible for the planning and development of building programs as well as arranging their financing. Beautiful new mission churches are being erected throughout the United States and Canada, each one helped by church extension funds provided by our Board of American Missions. While the members are getting ready to erect their church, they worship in many types of temporary buildings—homes, fire halls, school houses, community halls, renovated barns, renovated chicken houses, stores, taverns. But the Gospel is proclaimed.

Each new congregation organized means another working unit in the Church of Jesus Christ, and another group of people witnessing to his saving love. It also lets children come together to learn the truth about God and the Christian way of life in Sunday schools and Luther Leagues.

The Board looks to the youth of today for its future ministers and parish workers. It also desires the prayers and gifts of our youth so that people throughout America may know Christ.

Social Missions

THIS Board, like other Boards and Agencies of the Church, serves you and serves in your behalf. Above all, it seeks to serve the Lord Jesus. "Missions" means serving for Jesus. "Social"

refers to society or people. Thus "social missions" might be defined, "serving people for Jesus' sake."

The Board does this through its three Departments.

Evangelism. This means simply, "bringing the Gospel of Jesus to people." Evangelism is the privilege of every Christian and every congregation.

To help members with this joyous privilege, the Department offers ideas, leadership and materials to congregations. It works directly through your Synod's committee on evangelism. This committee of Synod is in direct touch with your congregation's committee on evangelism. No doubt during the last few years you had at least one Lutheran Evangelism Mission in your congregation.

The Department continually encourages congregations to have an active evangelism committee. This committee has many projects to consider and carry out, such as a regular lay visiting program; a community religious census; special attention to new members and inactive members; deepening the spiritual life of the congregation through Bible study, prayer and daily family devotions in the homes; encouraging regular communion and worship attendance by all; and seeking to make "every member an evangelist."

Evangelism brought you into the Church. Probably it was family evangelism—your family brought you for baptism at an early age, to church and church school. Or perhaps it was a neighbor or a visitor from the church who brought you for the first time. God has been good to us in bringing us the Gospel and in bringing us into His Church. After one has been evangelized, he must in turn evangelize!

Inner Missions. This is a ministry of Christian love, particularly to people who are in special circumstances and need. "Works of mercy" are a special concern of Christ's people. They are a part of Jesus' Gospel of love. Inner missions is a ministry to special groups of people: the aged, the blind and deaf, the orphaned and neglected, the imprisoned and those

in hospitals and other institutions. They are the "shut-ins" and "shut-outs" of society.

This Department works with hundreds of institutions of the church and the state. It helps in local ministries to special groups, such as a congregation for the deaf. It gives guidance to pastors who do chaplaincy service in hospitals and institutions of all kinds. It provides certain materials, such as Luther's *Small Catechism*, in Braille for blind people. It also publishes *A Message for the Day* for weekly use of confined people.

Social Action. Social action in this context means that we take a serious look at the Bible and the life of Jesus Christ, and in that light see ourselves and others too. We see that God withholds no good thing from us, even though we choose the bad; that he is true in spite of what we are, and that in him there is more love than all the hate and strife the universe can bring. We see that all God is and does He offers us also; that God in Jesus Christ became our life and so made life all new.

This new life now changes things. It leads us to forgive and seek ways of understanding with our neighbors. It looks for opportunities to serve our fellowman, to love him through good deeds. This means that we must seek to know him and his needs.

Social action then attempts to explore what the true needs of the neighbor are: our neighbor of a different colored skin, or a different religion, or of strange language and habits in a far away land; our neighbor as a farmer, a business man, or a common laborer in a factory; our neighbor as a parent or child in the family; our neighbor in his needs of freedom to decide for himself and develop and employ his abilities to the fullest measure.

But to know the neighbor in his needs is not enough. Social action also means to seek the best and most effective ways of coming to his aid. Christian Social Action means the commitment of our total life to God in the service of our neighbor in his individual needs.

Foreign Missions

THE purpose of the Board of Foreign Missions is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with people in all parts of the world. To do this we send out missionaries to proclaim that Gospel, teach the meaning of the Christian faith and life, to establish the Christian Church so that its members can worship God and can take part in sharing the message of the Gospel with their own people.

The Board — twenty-one members, clergymen and laymen from various parts of the United States and Canada—meets three times a year in the Board headquarters in New York City to receive reports from eight different fields of work in eight different countries. The Board tries to solve problems, to plan policies for guidance, to allocate money to each field according to the year's budget and, most important, to interview and select for foreign service young people presented by the staff of secretaries.

The staff of secretaries (executives and administrators) carries on correspondence with the various fields abroad and sometimes visit them. The fields of work are: Argentina, British Guiana, Hongkong, India, Japan, Liberia, Malaya, Uruguay.

Activities of the Board are run by staff secretaries and the Board meeting works through committees, such as the Committee on Argentina, on British Guiana, etc. Each committee meets with the Board secretary who is responsible for that field. Other committees work on administration, candidates, literature published by the Board such as pamphlets and the monthly magazine called *The Foreign Missionary*. There is a committee on promotion and special gifts, one on finances.

Young people of the church should know about the Board of Foreign Missions because through this Board the members of our churches express their Christian belief in Christ as the Saviour of people everywhere. Through this Board all members obey the command of Christ to all His followers, to go into *all the world* and preach the Gospel.

Besides our Scriptural basis for the

work of foreign missions, there is the great need among the people of the world. Knowing the needs of the millions outside the Christian Church impels us to share with them Christ's concern for their souls and bodies.

Pensions

WE generally associate pensions with old age. This is correct for about 450 retired pastors are receiving a pension from the Board of Pensions of the ULCA. Their average age is over 77. In addition there are about 750 pastors' widows on the pension roll at an average age of a little over 71.

However, the Board of Pensions also serves children of deceased and disabled pastors and there are more than 100 of them on the roll at the present time.

The pension payments to pastors and widows are used primarily to provide food, clothing, shelter, medical care. The payments to children are intended for their support, maintenance and education.

At the present time the Board of Pensions receives approximately \$800,000 a year from the budget of the Church to help pay these pensions. All of us who are confirmed members of a congregation share in paying this through our benevolent contributions.

The Board operates a Contributory Pension Plan to which pastors contribute 4% of their salary each year and to which their congregations contribute 8% of the salary. When the younger of these pastors retire, it is expected that these combined contributions will have been sufficient to provide for them and their wives an adequate pension.

The Church has assigned the Advent Season to our Board to encourage individuals and congregations to make contributions to our Emergency Assistance Fund. These gifts are used to help pastors, retired and active, and their widows meet unusual expenses especially caused by sickness.

The Board of Pensions serves the pastors and their families. It is a liaison between the congregations and those who minister.

PRESENTATION POINTERS

This topic concerning the Boards of the ULCA is divided for two sessions. You may want to spend more or less time on the material.

You might work up a little playlet or series of scenes for each Board. In fact, you could have scenes and ask the leaguers to tell you what Board you were representing.

From the "Yearbook" learn where these various Boards are located and who is executive secretary of each. Learn these facts. Read through the other administrative members. Perhaps you know some of these people.

If you live close to New York City or Philadelphia you could plan a tour of the buildings that house these boards.

2

Deaconess

WHEN your great grandmother was a girl, the needs of people moved Christians into action, just as they did in the First Century Church. There were the sick to be healed, the orphaned to be cared for, the poor to be helped, children to be taught, congregations to be established, and a whole world to be evangelized. The church in your great grandmother's day, realizing it was not meeting the needs, looked back at the first century Church to see how it had been done then. It discovered that the early Christian Church abounded in works of mercy, that in the time of the apostles an ecclesiastical office had been created for men and women who offered their skills and time in Christian love to those who needed them.

The Greek word used to designate this office was *Diakonia*, meaning "service"; the Christian men and women who gave themselves to this work were called deacons and deaconesses, meaning "those who serve." Your great grandmother's church said, "Let us restore this office, *Diakonia*, to the Church. Let us elect a board which will be responsible for telling Christian girls of our day about the needs for their healing touch, their professional know-how, their Christ-like love and understanding. Let this board train these young women and place them where

opportunities are the greatest."

Thus the *Board of Deaconess Work* was appointed to recruit, prepare, and place young women in deaconess service; to establish deaconess houses and schools for church workers; to offer this service opportunity to women who wanted to become a part of the historic office, *Diakonia*, and also to those who wanted to meet these needs as freelance lay workers, independent of any organic relationship to the office.

The Board of Deaconess Work has been doing this for seventy years. It has told thousands of women about the many opportunities, the unusual adventure, the deep personal satisfaction of serving people through a church career. Hundreds of Lutheran girls have offered themselves. Some have dedicated their whole lives to such a career, either as deaconesses or free-lance workers; others have remained in the diaconate (English for *Diakonia*) until the time of their marriage. Many, after their marriage, have carried into their new life situation their Christian awareness of people's needs and their experience in a church career, becoming valuable workers in their local church and community.

The purpose of the Board of Deaconess Work is the same today as it was when established seventy years ago. Civilizations come and go, but basic needs do not change. Today we still have the sick, the under-privileged, the ignorant, the unwanted. Today the church still needs parish workers, social workers, medical workers, teachers.

The Board of Deaconess Work prepares leaflets, film strips, colored slides, and other materials which depict the needs of our day and inform Christians how they can meet people's needs through a church career. It has a staff of deaconesses who are available to speak to Luther Leagues, Sunday schools, and congregations. It directs two schools for church workers (in Gladwyne, Pa. and Ruxton, Md.). It maintains two deaconess houses, which are fellowship centers for the deaconesses and other women graduates of its schools. It cares for the retired deacon-

esses, who have spent many years of their lives in caring for others. It has a program for women over twenty-one who want to dedicate one year of their lives in full-time service to others through their church. These women are called AIDS (Associates In Deaconess Service).

How is the work of this board important to you? Young people are as much a part of the Church as adults. Our Lord commissioned his Church to care for the hungry, the imprisoned, the sick, the unwanted, the handicapped. This board is a channel through which every member of the church is enabled to have a share in carrying out our Lord's commission.

If you are a girl, this board may be of special importance to you. By this time people are beginning to ask you, "What are you going to do someday?" And you are asking yourself, "What do I want in my future?" Probably like most girls today, you want your life to be worthwhile. You want to feel that you are performing some useful service in this world which needs to be done. You want an exciting life, rich in experience and in friendships. *Diakonia* may be for you.

Parish Education

A CONGREGATION would have a rough time trying to operate a program of parish education all by itself. Where would it turn to find help in organizing a program? Where could it find someone able to train its teachers? Where would it get the money, time and qualified staff to write lesson materials and the necessary teaching aids?

But a congregation doesn't have to struggle with its educational program alone. That's why the United Lutheran Church in America has a Board of Parish Education. And now you will be able to guess what this board of the church does: *It helps congregations with their educational programs.*

The Board of Parish Education helps your congregation, and the other congregations in our ULCA in the following four ways:

1. Under its executive secretary, Dr. S. White Rhyne, the board provides a system

Higher Education

of organization for the educational work of congregations. It suggests ways to administer the educational work. And, it proposes educational agencies.

When you think of parish education, you probably first think of the Sunday church school. But did you know that the Board of Parish Education recommends no less than *fifteen agencies* through which a congregation may educate itself? If you are ready, here they come: The home, Sunday church school, weekday church school, vacation church school, catechetical classes for youth and adults, special interest groups, choirs, Christian kindergartens, children's activity and club programs, church services, leadership education courses, staff conferences, the United Lutheran Church Women, the United Lutheran Church Men, and the Luther League. Now count them and see if there aren't fifteen. How many of them does your congregation have?

This is the general work of the board. It accomplishes it through its three divisions.

2. *The Editorial Division.* The board provides printed materials for leaders and pupils. The staff of ten editors prepares materials in 26 different areas.

3. *The Departmental Division.* The staff of this division has six people who "specialize" in certain areas of work, and provide resources and suggestions for church leaders. One man promotes leadership education. Others give specialized help to leaders of children, youth and adults, or are ready to help with camps and summer schools.

4. *The Field Division.* Much of the board's work is done behind desks in Philadelphia. But a lot of time is spent away from the office, visiting synods and congregations giving personalized assistance.

That, in a capsule, is how the Board of Parish Education operates. The Board hopes that the material it has produced and the teachers it has helped to train, have helped you. The board plans to be on the job providing the kind of help you need in the years to come as the teachers and leaders of your congregation.

The ULCA has given a mandate to the Board of Higher Education to render the maximum service to its youth, teachers, colleges and seminaries. The Board serves through 21 clergymen and educators with a staff of an executive secretary and associate secretaries. The program of the Board is effected through the cooperation of officers and committees of synods, the boards and faculties of colleges and seminaries.

The 14 colleges related to the ULCA have prepared more than 50,000 men and women in the sciences, humanities and other areas. The Church's 10 seminaries have prepared more than 4,000 pastors and other church workers. In addition to the preparation of occupational and professional personnel the colleges and seminaries are engaged in research projects of value to communities, business, industry and the Church. The curricula and research programs of the colleges and seminaries are influenced to a great extent by the leadership of the Board. In accomplishing these objectives the colleges and seminaries benefit from the advice made available by the Board on matters related to constitutions, organization, administration, promotion, curricula, faculties, libraries, student life, general welfare and development.

One of the major activities of the Board is its vocational counseling service to youth. The staff affords information on various vocations, arranges consultations with executives and personal interviews with youth, plans vocational conferences and directs summer service opportunities for college students.

The staff of the Board coordinates the efforts of all the boards and agencies in securing required personnel in these four major categories: clergy, missionaries, deaconesses, and lay workers. Church workers in these classifications serve as parish pastors, secretaries, nurses, parish workers, teachers, journalists, social workers, business managers, musicians, counselors, administrators, technicians and others.

Whereas synods give financial aid to church vocation candidates who are attending college, the Board gives financial aid to graduate students who are preparing for specialized service in the Church.

Publication

IN an army, the Quartermaster Corps has the responsibility of providing the food, clothing, transportation, quarters and all other supplies needed to make the organization effective. If you can think of our United Lutheran Church "like a mighty army," the Board of Publication represents its "Quartermaster Corps."

A quick look around your church building will reveal dozens of items that are specially provided for worship. You can't buy most of them in the corner store. They must be supplied by specialists who know what the church needs and who have the know-how to produce it. For example . . . the pews, pulpit and other furniture . . . the colored altar and pulpit hangings (called "paraments") . . . the hymnals . . . the Sunday bulletins . . . all kinds of Sunday school lesson books . . . offering envelopes . . . books for colleges and seminaries, for pastors, for Christian family reading, for devotions. . . .

In 1855 a little group of pastors and laymen in Pennsylvania decided that the church ought to be able to provide some of these things for its congregations. They organized the Lutheran Publication Society. Today it is known as the Board of Publication of the ULC. It employs nearly 300 people, has its headquarters in a new \$2.5 million building at 2900 Queen Lane, Philadelphia, and branch stores in eleven other cities: New York, Los Angeles, Austin (Texas), Baltimore, Des Moines, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Columbia (S. C.), Rio Piedras (Puerto Rico), Kitchener (Ontario) and London, England.

The Board of Publication operates as a business organization. It does not receive any funds from the church. It manufactures and prints material which must be sold at a price that will break even or make a small profit. If there is a profit,

it is turned over to the United Lutheran Church. The church headquarters in New York City, for example, was bought largely with funds provided by the Board of Publication.

The new Lutheran Hymnal and Service Book is an example of the church's gain from having a strong Publication Board. Costs of buying paper, making printing plates, binding and distributing the book's first 600,000 copies amounted to almost \$300,000 before a single penny could be gotten back from the sale of the book to congregations. Only a strong and financially-sound publishing house could swing such a deal. Another example is in *The Lutheran*, our church's weekly newspaper-magazine. *The Lutheran* has a bigger circulation than any other Protestant weekly magazine. It has made our church well-informed. It is read in the White House and in the UN as an authentic report of general church news and as an indication of what church people are thinking about current problems.

The United Lutheran Publication House does not try to tell churches what some of things they should buy. When a congregation asks for some necessary item, however, the house tries to be ready to supply it. Because our 4,500 congregations have such varied needs, the Publication House carries a very large stock. Some people want crosses, some want crucifixes (a cross with the figure of Christ on it), some want kneeling benches, some want flags, some want music boxes that play "Happy Birthday to You," and so forth.

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Most of the Boards have fliers explaining their work. Arrange a display of these fliers for your league meeting room—or a church narthex. You could make pipe cleaner figures in sand box scenes depicting the work of the Boards.

Review last week's Boards. Then continue with the remaining four.

Be sure to discuss these Boards in the light of how they pertain to you—now and in the future. Are you up on what's going on in your church?

Perhaps you will want to end with a lit quiz. Be sure the leaguers know which Board which. Some are very easy.

A VENTURE IN FAITH

stewardship topic



SOME people do not believe that Christ even exists. Others believe that He lived once only as another good man. The Christian believes that He is alive today, forgiving our sins and giving us salvation. Because we believe this we call Christ our Lord. (Read Matthew 16:13-19)

Close your eyes and think—do you actually believe that Jesus Christ is your Lord? (*pause*) At this time you may mark yes or no after the first question. (*allow time*) If you have marked yes we can say that you have faith.

The Church is based on that faith. The Church is the oldest institution on earth. The Christian Church is the largest institution on earth. While governments rise and fall the Church marches on. If Christ is your Lord, you will want to be part of His body, the Church. As a member of His Church you will want to be a good and wise steward.

God wants us to use our money wisely. It is wise to budget our money—some for savings, some for objects which will be permanently useful. Now answer the second question.

Some people believe that the universe came about by chance. More scientists today believe that there is a great mind which has planned the order of the universe. Just as a watch must be made by a jeweler, so the intricate order of the universe must have been created by God.

If God has created this world and

everything in it then He must have created it for a purpose and everything should fit into His plan. The Christian believes that God sent His son to forgive the sins of those who have faith. If we accept these beliefs, knowing that God has created us for a purpose and has forgiven our sins for a purpose, then we are totally His and we will want to use all that we are in a way that will please Him and fit His plan. (*sing first and second verses of "We Give Thee But Thine Own."*)

Now answer the third question. (*pause*) If you have marked yes, you have said yes to stewardship. Read and answer the fourth question.

The Christian seeks to give his total life to God. He budgets all of His life—time, talents, money, energy—in carrying out the will of God. He chooses a life work under God's guidance. He selects a life mate with God's help. He uses his recreation to strengthen him for fulfilling God's task.

As a part of this total giving of self to God, the Christian offers to serve God through the Church. One way of doing this is through contributing money for the work of the Church.

God asked the Hebrew people to tithe (that means the first 10% of the harvest) and give this to the church. To tithe one must be regular and systematic. Do you want to take part in this work of the Lord by a regular, systematic, and satis-

VENTURE QUIZ

- 1 Do you believe that the Jesus Christ who received you as His child in Holy Baptism is now your Lord and Savior?
- 2 Are you acquiring through an allowance, odd jobs, or regular work, money that you can call your own?
- 3 Do you believe that all you have—time, talents, and treasures—really belongs to God and that you are to be a good trustee of what He has given you?
- 4 Do you recognize that in and through your congregation you are carrying on the Lord's work on earth?
- 5 Do you wish to take part in this work of the Lord by a regular, systematic, and satisfying plan of giving?
- 6 Will you study the opportunities for God's work in your congregation and through your congregation to the world?
- 7 Will you determine a definite percentage of all money you receive or earn for the Lord's work in your Church?
- 8 Will you pledge a specific amount as your weekly offering for the whole work of your congregation?
- 9 Will you agree that your weekly offerings be divided equally between your congregation's local work and its world-wide ministry?
- 10 As a venture in faith, will you now pledge a specific portion of your earnings and allowance?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Yes ☐ No ☐

Yes ☐ No ☐

Yes ☐ No ☐

Yes ☐ No ☐

Yes ☐ No ☐

Yes ☐ No ☐

Yes ☐ No ☐

Yes ☐ No ☐

Yes ☐ No ☐

The portion I give will be

giving plan of giving? Answer the fifth question.

Let us pray: Gracious Father, we pray that Thou hast spoken to our minds. May our answer to Thee always be yes. Give us faith and vision as we continue to think of Thy will for our lives. In the name of our Lord and Savior. Amen.

It costs thousands of dollars to operate a church. But most churches could be doing twice as much as they are doing if they had the money. You will want to answer yes to the next question. (*answer question six.*)

Through money given to the church, people are brought into relationship to

God and souls are saved at home and abroad. New churches are built, pastors trained, full-time church workers are employed, and Bibles are purchased and distributed round the world.

True gratitude grows out of simple faith. As we budget our income we can show God that He does come first in our devotion by taking the first part of our money and laying it aside for work in His church.

Do you think this money should be set aside first, or merely be given from what is left? Think through the next question before you answer it. (*answer question seven*)

Will you pledge a specific amount as your weekly offering for the work of your congregation and the United Lutheran Church in America and its fields overseas?

A statue in Germany was restored after the war. As the men searched through the rubble for the pieces of the statue of Christ, they found everything but the hands. They mounted the statue without hands. At the bottom of the statue the men put a sign which reads, "I have no hands but your hands."

God depends on us to do His work. Can He depend on you? Answer yes or no. (*answer question eight*)

Once Christ said, "Go into all the world." He didn't say, "Missionaries, go into all the world." He meant you and me and everyone. Are you going?

Money is like a big spring. We can wind up a spring and send it to Japan to do some work for us. Our Church is starting new churches every week. Everywhere people are being told about Christ. But many more could be told about Him if there was enough money. How can we answer no to this great need?

When you give to the offering in church, some of the money is kept for things we need here in our congregation—lights, heat, equipment, salaries. Some of the money is sent to the synod and the ULCA for wider work. This we call benevolence.

Read silently the ninth question. What is your answer? (*answer nine*)

Up to this point you have expressed your beliefs. Now comes the time to put that belief into action.

We invite you into a new adventure. The Bible has a word for it—tithe. Remember, the tithe means to give the first tenth of your earnings to His church.

It takes faith to say that you'll give the first 10% of your earnings to God's special work. Some will want to start out with a little less. Others will want to give more—say 12% or 15%. Whatever you give, you should plan to give it sincerely.

It will be a new venture in life—to take God into partnership with you.

Start this venture in faith now by mark-

ing the amount you think you can give regularly. If you can give 10c of each dollar, mark 10%. If you can give only 5c of each dollar, mark 5%. Fill in the amount you pledge to give. (*allow time to fill in square.*)

Let us pray: Oh God, we have promised to give the first part of our money to Thee. Keep us faithful in this venture. Amen.

If your answers were yes and you pledged to give 10% or more, you may obtain a venture chest for keeping your money. (*pass out the cards*) You fill in the card if you desire the chest, tear off the top, and pass it on. We will mail it for you.

The chest is given by the Lutheran Laymen's Movement for Stewardship. Please do not ask for one of these chests unless you honestly intend, with God's help, to tithe.

This venture chest will be mailed to you from New York. The per cent you have promised to give may be placed in your chest and then your offerings may be withdrawn as they are needed.

If there are doubts in your mind, remember that this is a venture in faith.

PRESENTATION POINTERS

On the night of the venture chest program you will be starting several young people on a new venture. In fact, if you prepare well for this program, the Church will have hundreds of dollars more to use in making a Christian impact in your community and the world. For you are starting young people on a venture that should last a life time. The enthusiasm with which you lead the group will determine the enthusiasm with which they will undertake the venture.

Mimeograph the questions on page 26. Hand these out, one to each person. Make sure everyone has a pencil. At indicated places in the topic pause for the leaguers to answer the questions. Give them time to think about the questions.

This is merely a guide. You may have other information to add. At spots you may want to stop for discussion. But keep the topic moving, so that you can finish it before meeting time is over!

Pledge cards and venture chests can be secured free from Lutheran Laymen's Movement, 231 Madison Avenue, New York 16.

Come, Let Us Return Thanks

*thanksgivings
from the bible*

by ANNAMARY SMITH



WHEN the Pilgrims landed at what was later to become Plymouth, Massachusetts, they fell upon their knees and thanked God for His watch-care and provision. In 1621, they held their first Thanksgiving and again in 1623, they and a colony thanked and praised God.

But these were not the first public expressions of thanksgiving on the American continent. In 1610, a decade before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, the little colony at Jamestown, Virginia had a community thanksgiving service.

The Pilgrim fathers, however, were not the first to observe a festival of Thanksgiving. Let us turn to our Bible—in the Old as well as the New Testament—where we will find many festivals of Thanksgiving being observed.

Old Testament

Feast of Passover. It was the end of 430 years of bondage, that the children of Israel gave thanks to God for bringing them safely out of the land of Egypt.

(Exodus 15). This is known as the "Feast of the Passover" (Numbers 28:16). Our Lord celebrated this Feast with His disciples on Holy Thursday (Mark 14:12-16). Devout Jews still observe this Feast.

Feast of Tabernacles. It was God who heralded the "Feast of Tabernacles"—or of Booths or Ingathering (Sukkoth)—approximately 3500 years ago and this is the forerunner of our New England "Harvest Home" and Thanksgiving festivals. This festival was celebrated in autumn at the ingathering of the harvest when the Hebrews paid homage to God for the produce of the land, and when remembrance was made of the forty years of wanderings in the wilderness by their kinsmen (Deuteronomy 16:13-17).

Hannah's Prayer of Thanksgiving. After many years of marriage without children, Hannah prayed to God for a son. In her old age, God answered her prayer and gave her a son whose name was Samuel ("name of God"). So thankful was Hannah that in gratitude she returned to the temple with Samuel and told the priest Eli that as long as Samuel lived, he would be the Lord's. Hannah's Prayer of Thanksgiving is recorded in 1 Samuel 2:1-10.

Jonah's Prayer. God had commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh. In disobedience to God's will, Jonah got aboard a ship headed for Tarshish. A violent storm arose and Jonah was swallowed by a huge fish and lodged in the fish's belly. In his affliction, and recognizing his sinfulness, Jonah prayed to God for deliverance—here is Jonah's prayer of thanksgiving for deliverance as recorded in Jonah 2:1-10.

Isaiah's Song of Thanksgiving. Isaiah tells the Hebrews of the future hope of Israel—how they should give thanks to God. This song of thanksgiving by Isaiah pours forth from a happy and grateful heart which knows the goodness and help which comes only from God (Isaiah 12:1-6).

A King's Psalm. King David prepared a place of worship and placed in it the Ark of God. Then he gave to those who ministered in this House of Worship a

psalm of thanksgiving. This Bible passage (1 Chronicles 16:7-14) records the first part of that psalm.

Book of Psalms

We could find many more expressions of thanksgiving in the Old Testament. Perhaps the most familiar are found in the Book of Psalms (the ancient Hebrew hymnal). Many of these psalms are used today as the basis of our forms of worship—as prayers, hymns, etc. This is mainly due to the fact that the psalmists placed God at the very center of their lives. Their highest goal was to glorify God. This should be the sincere desire of every Christian today. Let us turn to the Book of Psalms . . .

Individual Thanksgiving. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name!" The psalmist David begins the 103rd Psalm by addressing his own soul—bidding it to praise God, thus making his poem one of individual thanksgiving, emphasizing the need for personal thanks to God. If your confidence, your hope, your joy are in CHRIST, you, too, can say as did the psalmist: "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name!"

A Test for True Thankfulness. If our hearts are filled with gratitude and expressed in the words we say, then we will live accordingly, says the writer of Psalm 119. How true! If we are truly grateful to God from whom all blessings flow, we cannot help but reflect it in our daily lives. Psalm 95 (*Venite Exultemus*) is another name for it. We use this psalm as an expression of thanksgiving in our Matin Service. (Psalms 100, 105, 106, 113, 114, 115, 116, and many others are psalms of thanksgiving.) In fact, we could say the whole Book of Psalms are examples of thankfulness expressed in many ways.

New Testament

Thanks for Food. One of the most meaningful expressions of gratitude in the New Testament is recorded in Mark 14:22-23. Here we find that the giving of thanks for food before meals is not

new. In observance of the "Passover Feast," with his disciples, our Lord, before he partook of food, gave thanks. How meaningful for us!

Thanks for all Men. 1 Timothy 2:1-8 is often used as a Gospel Lesson for Thanksgiving Day. What a wonderful message Paul gives to each one of us. We should give thanks for all people. He continues to give instructions on how we should live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Quite timely, don't you think?

Thankfulness in Spite of Opposition and Misunderstanding. Paul thanks God for giving him strength to preach the Gospel in spite of opposition and misunderstanding as recorded in 1 Timothy 1:12.

Hymn of Thanksgiving. Ephesians 1 records Paul's hymn of thanksgiving for spiritual blessings . . . through Christ. He then catalogs the gifts of grace, which include adoption and full redemption guaranteed by the sealing of the Holy Spirit till the purchased possession is redeemed and shines forth to the praise of God's glory. For these imperishable gifts, the apostle is eternally grateful. It is significant that Paul's gratitude continued even in the face of trials and hardships for Christian thanksgiving always implies *complete* and *continuous* trust in God.

Thanksgiving for Cleansing. Here we have the familiar story of the cleansing of the ten lepers . . . only ONE returned to give thanks to the Healer (Luke 17: 11-19).

A Life of Thanksgiving. "As therefore you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so live in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving" (Colossians 2:6-7). This was Paul's message to the church in Colossae, but how timely for us today!

Luther's Catechism

In *Luther's Small Catechism*, the explanation to the First Article of the Apostles' Creed lists 14 blessings God has given . . . body and soul, limbs and senses,

reason and all the faculties of the mind, raiment, food, home, family, property, necessities of life, protection from danger, guarding against evil. What a catalog of blessings.

For all this divine goodness and mercy says Luther, "I am in duty bound to thank, praise, serve and obey him."

We really become thankful when we recognize our own unworthiness and realize God's grace.

The Lord's Prayer

In the Lord's Prayer, we so often say instead of *pray* "Give us this day our daily bread . . ." Did you ever stop to think what all this includes? Here we are not only asking for bread to eat but for all things good for us.

If we turn to Luther's *Catechism* for an explanation of this petition, we find that Luther explains "God gives indeed without our prayer, even to the wicked, also their daily bread; but we pray in this petition that He would make us sensible of His benefits, and enable us to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving." Those last two words "with thanksgiving"—how many things God gives us that are included in this petition, and how often we fail even to thank Him for the one gift that is mentioned in this particular petition—our daily food.

Let us remember to give thanks to God at all times for all the blessings which we know come from Him alone. The next time we pray the Lord's Prayer, let us think seriously about the words we are praying and it will mean so much more to us in our living a life of thanksgiving. Let us start tonight as we close our Luther League meeting.

Thanksgiving—Today

The scientist bores great tunnels under high mountains and throws mile-long bridges across mighty rivers; he builds planes that encircle the globe in a matter of hours; he splits the atom and threatens with destruction entire civilization. And yet a thing so tiny as a grain of wheat is beyond the power of any scientist to create.

Think a moment about two or three things God has done and what they mean to you—to me—to us. It is God who endows the grain of wheat with life, which generation after generation gives bread to eat and to spare. It is God who provides the elements with which man begins to fashion and forge and fabricate the many things of his making, both great and small. It is God who gives us the life we enjoy. And when men forget Him and what He has done for them, it is God who through His Son, Jesus Christ, pours out His heart on Calvary in love that they may be restored to sonship with the Father.

For him who is anything aware of God's great goodness and love, it is only natural that he should seek ways to express his thankfulness. In the last an-

alysis, man, despite his much-vaunted prowess, can do nothing without God. How can we express our gratitude to God for all his benefits to us? No more effective expressions of gratitude can be made than the dedication of life—time, talent and treasure—to the fulfillment of God's eternal purposes. When we do this we are but returning to Him that which in reality is His own.

As we observe this Thanksgiving season and make preparation for the Christmas season, may we remember with gratitude the greatest gift God has given to each one of us—the gift of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour. May we dedicate ourselves anew as individuals and as a group to the fulfillment of God's eternal purposes. May He use each one of us.

PRESENTATION POINTERS

The theme for a meeting in November is a "natural"—Thanksgiving. Special days provide great opportunity for putting across spiritual truths. Let's make the most of this topic. Caution: Intermediates and advisors we would remind you that the material given here is just a "spark" for your own planning. You will want to change and/or add to the suggestions.

Following are technique suggestions for group participation:

1. As the various scripture passages are read, have the characters stand in back of a sheet, with a large floodlight to the rear of them. This makes a silhouette effect for the audience.

2. Construct a large replica of the Bible by using a folding screen, covering it with black crepe paper. Or you may obtain a cardboard box at some furniture store or other shop in your town. If a box is used, cut down one side of it and across both ends so it will open like a book. Paint black or cover with black crepe paper. As the portions of scripture are read the characters could step out of the Bible (dressed simply, but biblically).

3. As Bible passages are read . . . you may discover one that you would choose a favorite passage to be told by way of puppets.

4. Assign all Bible passages to different individuals well in advance so that they can be presented in a "well-read" manner at the meeting. Encourage group discussion after each passage.

5. Choose large pictures to depict the Bible

passages. As they are read, place the pictures in the front of the group on an easel, or have two responsible persons hold them in view of the group.

WORSHIP SUGGESTIONS

PRELUDE: a Thanksgiving hymn played softly on the piano as candles are lighted by an intermediate acolyte.

CALL TO WORSHIP—O give thanks to the Lord for he is good; For his steadfast love endures forever! (Psalm 136)

HYMN

PRAYER—Prayer 24 page 366 **CYH**—the leader reads the opening and closing with the other 10 blessings assigned to different persons.

TOPIC PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

OFFERING—during offering have a talented leaguer or leaguers present an instrumental or vocal selection of an appropriate Thanksgiving Hymn

LORD'S PRAYER

CLOSING THOUGHT: "Lord of Harvest, grant that we wholesome grain and pure may be." Amen.

Suggested Hymns—(all in the Christian Youth Hymnal): Come, Ye Thankful People, Come (171); For the Beauty of the Earth (184); Now Thank We All Our God (98); O Worship the King (85); Praise the Lord of Heaven (79); Praise to the Lord, the Almighty (78); We Plough the Fields and Scatter (172); Take My Life, and Let It Be Consecrated (249).

EVERY day evangelism is our command—as Luther Leaguers and as Christians. Youth have been chosen by Christ to be His ambassadors, empowered by Him to do His work, and given strength to bear fruit in His kingdom.

The “come” to Jesus, and bringing to Jesus, always carries a “go” with it. God says . . . Go! We as the youth must go forth as soldiers in Christ’s army. Evangelism is warfare. Our weapons are words—truth—ideas. We do not kill or destroy. We take as captives boys and girls who fight to resist. They must be bound by their conscience, driven by their will, carried away by their spirit, built up by their faith.

Youth is the age of courage. The strength and zest of youth is God’s reserve for recruits. You are enlisted in

GO AND BRING

evangelism

by MRS. ROBERT B. BAKER

this warfare of evangelism. As Paul, you want to fight a good fight.

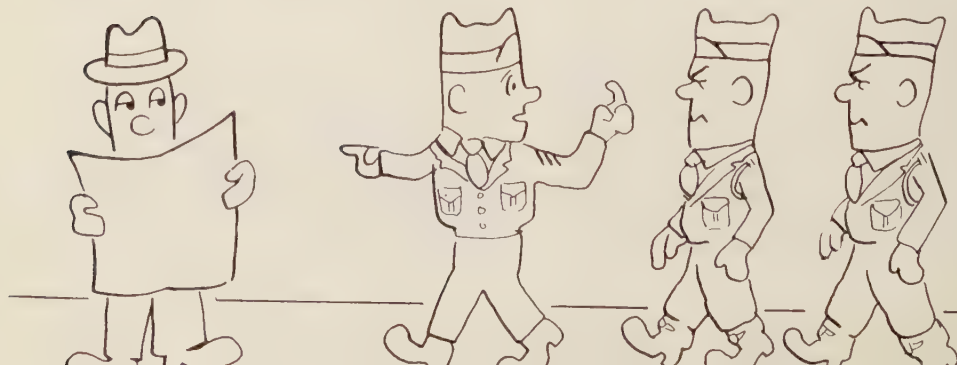
We must reach a point of contact with these unchurched youth and make them see themselves as God sees them.

Perhaps some of you on hearing about evangelism, have said, “But I can’t talk to other people about God.” If so you need some help in learning how to express your faith. To be an evangelist you do not have to be an accomplished speaker. Words spoken simply and sincerely are effective in furthering Christ’s kingdom.

What You Believe

What a person believes is fundamental to his success as an evangelist. If a person does not understand why he attends church or why he calls Christ “Savior” he will have a mighty difficult time trying to tell anyone else. It does not mean, however, that one must be an expert on theology. If you understand the meaning of evangelism, know the working of your Luther League, are good friends with God through daily prayer and Bible reading, and strive to be a working Christian steward, you are then in God’s hands to be used as he wishes. You are then ready to “Go” with Christ at your side. You can’t lose, for when the faith and zeal of a leaguer goes as a witness in the name of Christ, something is bound to happen.

The seed sown now may not be reaped for weeks, months or years. However, as a disciple of Christ and His Church, your witness is of primary importance in the evangelization of a person, whether he is immediately receptive or not. “Your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”



How?

How do you witness through visitation evangelism? This can be an enjoyable part of any league's program. It vitalizes the members as they become spiritual lifelines carrying the love of Christ to other youth. A team of three (two leaguers plus Christ) can do work of eternal meaning when they go into a home in the interest of Christ and the church.

Many have been waiting for Christ to be spelled out in human living for them. Christian youth can become God's magnets with which He draws others to Himself. We are not asked to "win" anybody. Only God can win. We are to plant the word.

The spirit of the visitor means everything. He needs enthusiasm, dedication, and faith. Pray before you call. Then relax and enjoy the visit. Be prepared to listen to your host's answers. While calling create an orderly situation in which conversation is easy and natural. Be polite.

Tell why you have come. "This week some of us are calling on our friends to tell them about the church and invite them to be active in the services of the church, the Sunday School and the Luther League." Do not talk too much yourself.

Be able to answer questions. "Why should I join the church?" "What's so important about your League meetings?" "How do you know you are right?" "How can the church help me?" In answering be persistent, but don't argue. Be enthusiastic, understanding of the fact that other youth may not have a Christian home and church training as you have. Tell what your faith means to you.

Take along the church bulletin, a religious picture, a printed message from the pastor, or a copy of *Luther Life*. Don't try to talk like your pastor. Be yourself.

Clear Away Excuses

Excuses given by youth on such calls as these must be cleared away before progress can be made. Listen attentively and sympathetically to excuses without agreeing with a poor excuse.

I'm too busy with school work, my clubs, and other activities. We're all

plenty busy, but God gave us all the time we have. He also deserves the time He asks from us.

I tried, but I haven't found God to be real. Prove Him to me. Come to church school, worship, and league meetings with us. Give God a chance to come into your life. He will prove Himself to be real.

I have not felt accepted by the young people at the church. There are too many cliques. We came here because we all are anxious to have you. Church people naturally like each other but if that makes us so busy talking to each other that we forget to welcome newcomers, then we should be ashamed of ourselves. When you are a member, you can help correct that. We like you and want you for a friend.

Welcome Him

When the young person seems ready to decide ask him to read the statements which apply to him on the visiting card. Tell him the pastor will be happy to know that he has decided to come.

Be on hand to welcome the prospect at the church or the Luther League. Open your circle of friendship immediately to include this one who may be coming for the first time. If he or she does not feel a part of the group the first night, it may be difficult to return. Have especially worthwhile and well-planned meetings. Bringing youth to Christ is our primary task. Increasing the membership of our Luther League is secondary but will follow naturally.

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Refer to the index in the last issue of *HIGH IDEALS* for additional information on evangelism. Read as many of these other topics as you can before presenting your topic.

Following the topic, discuss what your league can do. Make careful plans. In fact, the topic itself may be carried over for several weeks in order to give careful study to the subject.

Your leaguers may be interested in the flier "Evangelism in the Home," available from Evangelism Department, Board of Social Missions, 231 Madison Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. (\$1.10 per 100)

FROM a broad base formed by the massive Himalaya Mountains, the land of India stretches to the south in an inverted equilateral triangle. The snows of Kashmir and Mt. Everest drift southward to form great rivers of the northern plains. Barren deserts, red-soiled scrub lands and jungles, make the fertile areas look like sparkling jewels. The green rice fields and the splotches of red chilis (peppers) drying in the sun contrast with the graceful palm trees and the golden stacks of straw which dot the countryside in the south of India.

The People

Close to 400 million people live in this land, in area the size of the U.S.A. east of the Mississippi. People of many backgrounds mingle together. Strange aboriginal tribes who hunt with bow and arrow; modern western-style men educated at Oxford or Harvard. Colorful Sikhs with well trimmed beards contrast with Hindu men, head shaved except for a tuft of hair usually tied into a knot.

The women of India are as colorful as birds of paradise. Their graceful saris reaching to their toes, make splashes of red and orange, green and blue on the landscape. The peasant women, silver jewelry on arms and neck, can usually be seen carrying a bundle, basket or water atop the head. Young mothers, child astride their hip, work away tirelessly in home or field.

The Nation

5000 years of history have brought many invaders into India. With them have come new customs, languages, and religions. Today there are some 200 languages spoken, although only about 20 of these are of major importance.

For long centuries the ox-cart has been the means of transportation; oil lamps have burned dimly in the night; the spinning wheel in cottages has made the weavers famous; the wooden plow pulled by oxen or buffaloes has scratched the

SONG OF INDIA

learn about this
ULCA mission field

land. Today the traditional scenery continues but with strange new sights added. Busses and tractors, hydro-electric power plants, modern steel and textile mills, paved roads and airfields all point to a new India struggling to match the civilization of Europe and America. The old and the new live side by side.

Any up-to-date evaluation of the country must take into account the tremendous strides that have been made in every area of life, and the seriousness with which the people of India are intent upon overcoming the age old demons of sickness, ignorance and poverty. Actually India is a rich nation—its problem has been both religious and social.

The Religions of India

Three main non-Christian religions have molded the character of India. The first and greatest of these is Hinduism. Its strength has come from its imposition of a social structure which divides every



one into certain categories or "castes," from which there is no escape except by "death and rebirth."

The second great religion of India has been Buddhism. It is beginning to make itself known again today. The symbols of the new India—the wheel and the lions—are symbols of an ancient Indian Buddhist king, Asoka. He exemplified many of the ideals of modern India such as peace, brotherhood, tolerance, and concern for the people.

The third major religion is Islam. It entered India with the great conquerors who swept over the land. This faith, known also as Mohammedanism, has almost totally been confined to the people of that background.

The Coming of the Missionary

Christianity entered India with the coming in the first century A.D. of St. Thomas. The Mar Thoma Church is a descendant of that Christian community founded by the Apostle. The first Protestant work was established in 1706 with the arrival of two Lutheran pastors, Bartholomans Ziegenbalg and Heinrich Platechau.

Our Lutheran mission field was begun in 1842 by Father Heyer of the Pittsburgh Synod. Since that time many missionaries have gone out to the Andhra area of India, found on the East coast, to carry on and extend the work. They had to learn a new language, adjust to strange foods and learn a great deal about the customs of the people.

Ziegenbalg sat on the ground with little

boys and learned his alphabet by drawing the letters in the sand with his finger. Today our missionaries have a tutor who spends up to two years as their instructor in the Telegu language.

Missionaries even today must be careful of the many prevalent diseases. They boil all water and milk and are careful about the meats they eat. They sleep under mosquito netting or in well screened rooms.

The greatest problem for the missionary however, is that of understanding the superstitions and age-old traditions of the people. Courtesy and sympathy are required of anyone who carries the Christian message to those who have never heard it before. It is not easy to stand by and see the tragedies that stem from ignorance and lack of immunization. Yet India is fast moving to wipe out inequalities, illiteracy, disease and fear. Pioneers in this have been the band of faithful missionaries who have earned the respect of the people because they have led the nation along paths of progress.

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

How does one make the Gospel intelligible to those who cannot read or write, to those who are sick and starving? God's concern for his children in every crisis, was the key which would unlock this door. Missionary activity would have to be involved in a varied and complex work.

Education

Education was of prime and major concern. Children were eager to learn, even though parents were suspicious. So gradually little schools were started in villages, forerunners of the over 800 elementary schools that exist in our church today.

No people could possibly climb out of the depths of ignorance unless there was opportunity for education. Thus came high schools, and later a college—necessary steps toward training leaders for a future church and for a changing nation.

Today India is giving to its sons and daughters the freedom to be educated. Communities are eager to support their

schools. A resourceful teacher, one day, gathered together a group of students and formed a circus. They travelled through the area giving concerts and performances at the same time advertising the need of education for the community. When, later, a cyclone tore down some of the school sheds, the students, given a few weeks vacation, went into the fields to work and earn enough money to help rebuild the school. Today they are contributing their time and labor to the building of a chapel, not for themselves, but for a very poor Christian community nearby. Out of such schools, now renowned for the quality of their education, come students to enter the Andhra Christian College in Guntur, and become leaders in church and community.

Medical Service

It did not take long for the pioneer missionaries to recognize the need for medically trained personnel. Everywhere there was illness, suffering and tragedy. The first missionary doctors were women, because it was they only who could gain the confidence of the shy and protected women.

From small and very inadequate dispensaries to large and quite modern hospitals, the medical missionary has given India a new conception of the love of Christ and hope for mankind. Today five large hospitals, an impressive T.B. sanatorium, two major nursing schools, minister to the sick and suffering. With the nation's growth and progress, the government itself is embarked on a large program of medical services. But even now, the Christian institutions are showing the way to others in the quality of medical service and the genuine love and concern for the patient.

Many times each day the sick are brought in ox-carts or carried on a bed, much as in the time of Jesus, and laid at the doorstep of the hospital. With them come the rest of the family to live at the hospital, cook for them, and comfort them. "Satroms" or "visitors' accommodations" are a necessity in every hospital in India.

A new emphasis is today being placed on preventive medicine. Since much of the disease arises from insanitary conditions and lack of home care for even minor cuts and ailments, there is a great opportunity for the development of public health services.

Social Services

What happens to those who are lame, and handicapped? Through the centuries such people have turned to begging for a means of livelihood. Quite frequently they have been cast out of their homes and communities because they were a burden on their families and useless to society.

The Christian Church has brought a new hope for such as these. The missionaries through the years have taken in such unfortunates and for them have established a School for the Blind and a Colony of Mercy. Here they are taught to gain confidence in themselves and to learn a trade in order to earn a living. There are also colonies for lepers, "unclean" even in Old Testament times, where great things are being done to rehabilitate them.

For many years there were "homes for converts." When a woman would become a Christian it would sometimes mean that she would be ostracized from her family, disowned and cast out. Shelter for such as these showed a love and concern which only the Christian faith could exhibit.

The Church is Planted

The Church in India began to take shape when the first little groups of converts gathered together. It has grown in many directions through the years—in education, medical services, social agencies, and evangelism. This last is the key to the development of the Church, for the preaching of the Gospel has been at the heart of every service rendered.

From the small beginnings in the days of Father Heyer, the Lutheran Church in Andhra has grown to over 250,000 baptized members in 2155 villages and towns. In 1927 the formation of the Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church took place. Today its membership is di-

vided into 151 parishes

The President of the Church is an Indian as is the president of each synod. Only about three parishes are cared for by missionaries whose main task has been that of evangelism. Carrying his message into the countryside, touring through villages and visiting in home after home, the Gospel has become a part of modern India.

One of the major responsibilities of the missionary has been to train Indian personnel to carry on the work. This has been done effectively so that today there are exceptionally well trained Indian leaders as pastors, teachers, doctors, nurses, agriculturalists, printers and heads of institutions.

The process of training, however, must continue. The Church in America helps the Indian Church by bringing to this country some of its best students for additional training. At this moment there are eight students in the U.S.A. preparing for degrees in theology, education, medicine, social services and evangelism.

On the field, the Indian Church has assumed the responsibility of making its own decisions for the future, has under its care all the schools and hospitals, and is now being given all the properties previously held by the Mission.

The Future Beckons

After a hundred years of history the Andhra Church is embarking on a new era of Christian service. With the coming of independence in 1947, India has become conscious of its role as a leading nation of the world, and is eager to raise the standards of its people economically and socially. The Church, in this context, must find new ways to communicate its faith.

In villages and towns, pastors are calling their people together for daily matins, services at 4 a.m., before the dawn of the new day. Even regular Sunday services are held, in some places, at sunrise. This is traditional, for the people begin their daily household work before daylight, and set out to the fields and factories when the first faint rays of sun-

light usher in the morning.

The use of many Indian symbols indicates that the Church is integrating itself into the culture of the country. The use of the lotus flower in designs, the traditional pattern of singing a story instead of speaking it, the liturgy of the Church set to Indian music all lead an authentic native touch to the preaching of the Christian message, suggesting that imagination and bold experiment are the order of the day.

Because the Indian Christian leader is educated and highly qualified the missionary, too, must be a person with excellent qualification in his special field of service. Only those who are highly trained and experienced are called upon today to serve in the Indian Church.

To this Church other missionaries will be sent in the future. Perhaps you will be one of them. If so, you have a great heritage to live up to in a land where only 3% of the population is now Christian. For the missionary has left his mark as one who is dedicated, concerned and overflowing with the love of Christ. It is a great tribute to him when leaders of the country say "we need the missionary spirit for the building of the new India which is still to be."

PROGRAM POINTERS

Audio-Visuals—short subject films are available depicting the different areas of church work in India. Ask for the pamphlet "Audio-Visual Materials" from the Board of Foreign Missions.

Study The Religions—assign topics on Hinduism, Buddhism and Mohammedanism for a comparative discussion. How do these religions differ with Christianity?

Round Table Discussion—assign members as "missionaries," each with responsibility in one of the areas of church work such as education, medicine, social service, evangelism. Discuss the Church's concern for the whole life of the community.

Magazine Articles—the 1958 back issue of *Lutheran Woman's Work* and *The Foreign Missionary* magazines provide articles relating events and personal experiences of missionaries serving in India. See your pastor for copies.



THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

by DOUG KORSCHGEN

ONCE again, Christmas is seeping into our lives for a few weeks. And with Christmas, there comes a tremendous atmosphere that is commonly called the Christmas Spirit.

When we feel a certain tingling spirit in the air, we know the magic of Christmas has hit us again. And certainly it can be called magic, for at what other time of the year does that old grouch next door smile and say hello to you? Or what other time of year would the miser on the corner tip the newsboy?

It's Limited

It's unfortunate that this spirit doesn't prevail at any other time of the year. But it seems that the idea of giving must be put in a very definite place so that it will fit into the selfish and routine pattern of our lives.

The thought of keeping this spirit alive through the year is a disturbing one to many people. It might mean giving some thing that we want for ourselves. And it's just too hard to fit generosity of spirit into our fast-moving lives. No, this spirit

just doesn't fit!

Have you ever thought how wonderful it would be if you kept the spirit in your heart all year? If you retained this spirit let's call it a "Christian" spirit, you would be a pioneer, an explorer, and adventurer. Others are afraid to try a yearly Christian spirit. They're not sure it's been pre-tested and is absolutely safe.

Why doesn't youth try it to prove to the adults that "it can be done." It would be well worth your effort.

Limited as it may be, the Christmas spirit is marvelous while it is here. Let's make the most of it. During this time, nothing is too hard to do in order to spread the cheer of Christmas.

For instance, the soldiers in Japan paint Santa Claus as an Oriental so the Japanese children will not think of Santa Claus and Christmas as something foreign. And coming back on the boat, the sailors and soldiers forgot the rivalry of their two branches of service. They decorated a Christmas tree. They faked a Santa Claus. And they joined their talents to form a small band to play Christmas carols on the ship.

In a Stable

But the commercial side of Christmas is only one aspect of the spirit of Christmas. For the true Christmas spirit centers in a stable in ancient Bethlehem. It was there that Christ, the Saviour, was born. It was there that God revealed His divine, redemptive love. (sing "Silent Night, Holy Night.")

As the material things of life become dimmer we see God's plan for mankind. Then we see God's love so large, so powerful, so unselfish that He would share His Son, even sacrifice Him for us. The sins which would otherwise destroy us are blotted out by the miracle of Christmas and Good Friday and Easter. (say together John 3:16-17.)

Only when we kneel in prayer and humbleness before God can we find the real meaning of Christmas. As our words of thanks are heard by God He blesses us with a richer understanding of Christmas.

Let us pray that we may understand clearly God's love for us in giving His Son, Jesus Christ. (*silent prayer. Pianist may play "Silent Night" in background.*)

The Christian Spirit

(*Have a solo voice sing "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day."*)

Hundreds of people wrap gifts for children and the aged in our church institutions. Young people sing Christmas carols for the sick and elderly members of their congregation. Baskets of food are given to the needy. Some people save extra money during Advent to give as a special Christmas gift to the church.

If they can do it then, why not apply that Christian spirit for 365 days?

Some people do.

Various age groups visit church institutions during the year, sharing worship, giving of their talents. Many leaguers plan monthly visits to the homes of invalids of their congregation. Some do volunteer work at hospitals or in settlement houses. Others tithe—or go beyond the tithing point—in giving money to the work of the church.

Did you know that the tingling anticipation and sensation of Christmas can be yours for the entire year? It can!

All you have to do is dig a little deeper into your pockets! Or find extra time during the week to do thoughtful things. Or develop and share the talents that have been given you. Or consider everyone as your brother through Christ.

Most important, all you have to do is fall on your knees and discover God. He will give you the love so vital to Christmas spirit or to your newly discovered Christian spirit.

(Sing "Joy to the World.")

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Three people could present the topic. It can be given as it is—don't read it though!

By use of a blackboard, bulletin, or an announcement immediately preceding the topic, tell the group the page numbers of the two carols they will sing. This eliminates announcing any of the inserts to the topic.

UNANSWERED PRAYER

by DONALD J. CAMPBELL

GIVEN a broad enough conception of prayer there is really no such thing as unanswered prayer; that the act of prayer, being communion with God, carries its own best answer with it—the renewal of our lives at the divine source of life.

However, though in the above sense prayer is always answered, there is another sense in which it is not always

answered, namely the form of our petition. This is what people mean when they speak of unanswered prayer. It is this experience with which we shall now deal.

Many earnest Christians have the experience of unanswered prayer. In time of war many a mother's earnest prayer that her son will come home is not answered.

1.

First, this can be said: Unanswered prayer in no sense disproves the efficacy and value of prayer. The question of asking and answer is not all there is to prayer, not even the most important aspect of it.

George Meredith, in his novel, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, has the line: "Who rises from prayer a better man, his prayer is answered." No one can sincerely pray without being a better and stronger person for it. Thus, from the very prayer which we say is unanswered we derive the divine help which enables us to accept without bitterness its lack of answer.

When Phillips Brooks wrote: "Don't pray for tasks equal to your powers, but pray for powers equal to your tasks," he expressed a truth about prayer which we must always remember. The purpose of prayer is not to change life to suit us but rather to change us to suit life.

Though we may not always get an answer to our prayer in the terms of our petition—as in the case of the praying mother whose son did not return—we do always get the strength to accept the sorrow which may result and to triumph over it.

2.

Second, it can be said that what seems to be unanswered prayer may in reality be answered though not in the form in which the prayer was expressed.



The classical example of this is found in the story of Augustine and his mother, Monnica. In early life Augustine was far removed from the saintliness which later earned him that title. He was a sensuous skeptic. His mother, on the other hand, was a devout Christian, and her earnest prayer was that her son might become one. Mother and son lived in Thagaste, in North Africa, in the fourth century. Upon persuasion of some friends Augustine decided to go to Rome, a move which Monnica dreaded, for she feared that in the great city with all its evil influences her son would never be converted. So she prayed that Augustine might not go. But he went, and shortly after left Rome for Milan, where he came under the inspiring influence of Ambrose, the great bishop of Milan—and became a Christian!

Now, was Monnica's prayer answered or not? She had prayed that her son would not go to Rome, but he went. The form of her prayer certainly was not answered. But the spirit of her prayer—the prayer behind her prayer, so to speak—was that her son should become a Christian, and this was answered as a result of his going to Rome and later to Milan. God knew best. In not answering the form of Monnica's prayer he did answer the spirit of it—the reason for her prayer in the first place.

At this point we remember too that all Christian prayer must fit into the wholeness of the Christian faith. For example, the attitude of many modern people about death—that it is the worst possible thing that could happen to anyone—is sheer paganism. To the Christian who believes that life is eternal, and that both on this side of death and the other we are under the Father's loving care, death is by no means the worst thing that can happen. He can see that it is the best thing under some circumstances. Thus when we pray that someone we love may live, and that person dies, God may still be answering the spirit of our prayer, which really is, or should be, that what is best for the one we love may come to pass.

3.

A third explanation of unanswered prayer, which people seldom recognize yet which ought to be perfectly obvious to all, is this: Prayer can be answered in the negative. After all, No is an answer, certainly in human relationships. Then why not in our relationship with God. Furthermore, in human relationships, No is often the best answer to our petition. So, too, in our relationship with God. God knows our needs far better than we do. In his infinite love and understanding he must always give the best possible answer to our prayer. And because in our ignorance and selfishness we sometimes pray amiss, the best possible answer to our prayer must sometimes be No.

In this connection I like the story of Tommy and the electric train. Tommy belonged to a low-income-bracket family. His mother knew that he was praying for an electric train for Christmas. She also knew that the budget could not stand such an expensive gift, but she kept putting off telling her son in hopes that it might somehow be possible. Finally Christmas came, and there was no electric train for Tommy. The mother watched him closely for signs of disappointment and disillusionment, but there were none. Tommy played happily with the gifts he had received. Finally her curiosity could stand it no longer. "Tommy," she asked, "you were praying for an electric train, weren't you?"

"Yes, Mother," replied Tommy.

"Are you disappointed that God didn't answer your prayer?"

"Why, Mother," replied Tommy, "God did answer. He said No."

One reason why prayer should sometimes be answered in the negative is that God is concerned for the welfare of all, not just of the individual. Think what chaos would result if God answered the

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prayer of every individual in the form in which it was prayed.

The playwright Laurence Housman dramatically illustrates this point in one of his letters to Dick Shephard. A parson had told the dramatist about an experience of miraculous answer of prayer. This parson had an engagement to take the morning service one Sunday in a church some distance away. The train would arrive at the place without too much time to spare. The parson dozed off, then awakened with a start to find the train pulling out of his station. He knew he would be late for the service if he went on to the next town, so he prayed that the train might stop. Lo, and behold, some mechanical difficulty developed, and the train stopped. Our parson got out, arrived at the church in time, and took the service. A miraculous answer to prayer!

But Housman in his letter analyzes the situation. The train of course was running on a schedule. The mechanical defect which developed would make it late. This would annoy the engineer, probably to the point of profanity—which would be very bad for *his* soul. Then there were other passengers on the train besides the parson—perhaps a doctor who had to make another connection further up the line in order to reach the bedside of a seriously ill patient. Because of the delay he would miss his connecting train, and the patient might die as a result. Furthermore, there may have been another clergyman on the train due to preach in a larger church two or three stops further on, and the train's delay would prevent him from arriving at all. And God permits all these bad things to take place, Housman concludes with merciless logic, in order that this parson, who carelessly slept beyond his station, may arrive in time for his service—and probably preach a very poor sermon which would be bad for the souls of the congregation.

Our prayer may be, and often should be, unanswered because it is made in blind or selfish disregard of the fact that God is concerned with the needs of all,

not just of ourselves, and his answer to our prayer must always be in harmony with this greater concern.

Again, God must answer our prayer in the negative sometimes because he is primarily interested in the development of our characters, not the satisfaction of our desires. Every prayer of ours must be subject to that greater prayer, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done." If any specific prayer of ours is out of harmony with this greater prayer, then it is the greater prayer we want answered, not the specific prayer. Thus an answer of No to a specific prayer is often the best and right answer as far as the development of character is concerned.

4.

A fourth thing which can be said about unanswered prayer is this: The answer to prayer often takes time and requires patience. Let us not forget that in prayer we are dealing with him to whom "thousand years . . . are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."

We live in a practical and energetic age. We see amazing industrial and engineering accomplishments all around us . . . But this very practical capacity to produce results in a short time makes us impatient of results, and we transfer this impatience to the spiritual realm. We expect results from prayer almost overnight. And when these results are not forthcoming, we say that our prayer is not answered. We must learn the difficult lesson—certainly difficult for our age—that we cannot force spiritual matters; speed them up; that the answer to prayer is more often like the slow but sure process of growth in nature than the hectical speed of the industrial assembly line.

And why shouldn't it be? Spiritual results are for keeps. Industry has only time; God has eternity. The life of a car or a bridge is limited; the life of a man in the spiritual realm is unlimited. Industry must produce for the market while the market lasts. It cannot afford to take time. God is producing for an everlasting, unchanging market. He can

afford to take time.

In prayer we leave behind this hectic, practical world which demands quick results and step into eternity to work with God. And when we work with him, we must expect to be governed by the laws of his kingdom and his long-range purpose, not by the laws of the practical world we have left. Like him, in prayer we can afford to take time.

5.

Another reason why prayer must sometimes be unanswered, certainly in terms of the form of the petition, may be seen in the relationship between prayer and the natural order or natural law.

First, it must be obvious to all that it is God's faithfulness in sustaining the natural order which makes life possible on this planet. For example, if the ingredients in certain products which we find to be nourishing food today turned out to be poison tomorrow, we should all either die of poisoning or starve to death from fear of eating. Or if gravitation operated today but not tomorrow, not only would all life be destroyed but also the planet itself would disintegrate. We can live and plan our lives only because the universe operates by law and order, and not by caprice. Thus, because we all want life, it is fair to say that we all want God to continue the natural order which makes life possible; and we want this not only for ourselves but also for those we love, and for all mankind. But this natural order which makes life possible also takes life. Earthquakes, fire, floods, even disease, are all part of the natural order. Death, too, is part of the natural order. Thus when someone we love dies a sudden death due to some natural catastrophe, despite our earnest prayer that he may live, may we not say that though God did not will that individual death, he certainly willed the continuance of the natural order which caused the death. The continuance of the individual's earthly life and the continuance of the natural order were incompatible at that point, and God must choose the greater good. In such a case

the individual prayer could not be answered, much as God in love might desire to do so.

Finally, a Christian will hold to his faith in God even through the experience of unanswered prayer, else there is no particular virtue in faith. Faith means trusting where we cannot see, believing where we cannot prove. If everything were completely clear to us, there would be no need for faith. The test of our faith is not when it is easy to hold to but when it is hard, as through the experience of unanswered prayer.

Let us remember that our Lord's most agonizing prayer was not answered, "O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Never was a prayer more earnestly spoken than this. Never was a man more deserving of God's answer to his prayer. Yet the prayer was not answered. Jesus went to the cross. But he kept complete faith in God, his Father. The secret of his faith in the face of unanswered prayer is in the word "Nevertheless," the complete subjection of his will and desires to God.

Again, God has shown the way in his apostle, Paul. Paul apparently had some kind of troublesome physical handicap which he called "a thorn in the flesh." He prayed that he might be freed from it, but the prayer was not answered. Instead, he received the assurance from God, "My grace is sufficient for thee." In denying the answer to Paul's prayer God promised to give him the grace, the strength, to accept the handicap and to triumph over it. And we have only to read about Paul's life in the Book of Acts to know how wonderfully God kept this promise. No more vigorously creative life can be found in all history than that of the "handicapped" Paul.

We must accept the fact that we cannot always explain unanswered prayer. Sometimes we can, but by no means does all unanswered prayer fit into these explanations. . . . Surely it is better to admit with Paul that in our human finitude we just don't know, and must hold

(Continued on page 47)



CURING THAT SICK FRIENDSHIP

by EVELYN WITTER

this topic will help
diagnose your problems

THIS morning your closest friend passed you in the high school corridor with a "Hi" and gave you the "breeze." You'd been thinking for some time that all was not well between you. Now you are sure of it! But—what to do? What happened?

A healthy friendship is worth cherishing. But sometimes the best and the most beautiful friendship mysteriously sickens. And if the illness is sufficiently serious—it dies.

If you have an ailing friendship on your hands—one you really care about—resolve to diagnose the malady and apply the remedies before it proves fatal. As in most illnesses, it is important to catch the trouble in time, before the germ has a chance to dig in and do too much damage.

Diagnosis comes first. Germs of friendship sickness are many and varied, and clever at disguising themselves. Try to identify the attacking germ. It may be rivalry, jealousy, misunderstanding, possessiveness, outside influence, imagina-

tion, abuse, long separation, self importance—or a combination of some of these. Look closely at the symptoms to see what they tell. When your diagnosis is complete, it won't be difficult to prescribe the cure.

1.

Betty and Suzanne found a cure for their ailing friendship in time to save it. For years these two girls fitted faultlessly together, like a perfectly matched set of jewelry. That is, until they entered a most identical outfits at the county fair. They were rivals for prizes and then started a rift between them. Betty's outfit took first place and Suzanne's won second. Suzanne left the fair grounds with tears in her eyes.

From then on Suzanne avoided Betty more and more. The germ of rivalry had infected their friendship. It might have gone into complete collapse if Betty hadn't realized it was the rivalry but that had caused all the trouble. They decided they would try not to compete with each other.

The cure worked. For the contest sponsored by the neighborhood sewing center that winter, Betty's entry was a dress, Suzanne's a sports jacket. With rivalry eliminated their friendship was healed.

2.

A friendship sickness with much the same symptoms as rivalry is jealousy. Jealousy can raise a mean temperature that no friendship can survive. This was almost what happened in the case of Leo and Ronnie, who had been friends since first grade.

Leo got his driver's license and his parents' permission to drive the family car. Ronnie's folks were dead set against teen-ager driving and forbade him both the license and the car. Ronnie wanted very much to drive, but his parents stood firm on their decision, no matter what he said or promised.

As Leo drove more frequently, Ronnie's desire to drive grew still greater. He was snippy to Leo and said unjust things, as sick people with high temperatures often do. The friendship might have burned out if Ronnie himself hadn't worried about the germ that was affecting his feeling for Leo.

One day he went to Leo and said, "I'm sorry I've been acting so silly. It's all because I can't drive and you can."

Leo was quick to respond with a smile. "You'll get to drive someday. In the meantime you can always go with me. Hop in!"

When jealousy was put down, friendship regained its health.

3.

Misunderstanding, like a common cold, hits frequently and can develop into serious trouble unless it's taken care of. Take the friendship of vivacious Nita and quiet Kathleen. Though their personalities were so different, they enjoyed doing things together—things like swimming and volleyball and dancing. It was natural that they should decide to go to summer camp together. When Nita said she'd try and stay for the whole two-

week period, Kathleen signed up for two weeks, paid the fee in advance, and made all necessary arrangements.

On the day the girls left for camp Nita remarked that a week seemed such a very short time.

"But we're going to camp for two weeks!" Kathleen exclaimed.

Nita replied that when they had first talked about camp they had agreed to stay a week. Later she probably had said she might try to make it two weeks! But her folks were leaving on their vacation during the second week and they wanted her to return and go with them.

It was a clear misunderstanding, but a vexing one. Kathleen exploded with harsh words. She told Nita she naturally had assumed that she would stay two weeks. In fact, she had signed up for that length of time on Nita's word. Nita coughed out some harsh words too and said that Kathleen should have checked first if there was any doubt.

Chills set in. It looked for a while as if this friendship was going to choke to death on the phlegm of misunderstanding. But both girls were too grateful for their friendship to let that happen. They saved the gasping friendship with a good dose of talking-it-out.

Once the misunderstanding was healed, they talked over the best way to make the most of the camp situation. It was agreed that they would make an extra special effort to get acquainted with the other girls, so Kathleen's second week without Nita would still be fun. Nita, a good mixer, helped by telling the girls all the nice things she knew about Kathleen—her accomplishments and what a grand person she was once you got to know her. The cold misunderstanding was expelled and the friendship continued on a sturdy basis.

4.

Another friendship-breaker is separation. Friends often say that separation can make no difference to true friendship. A noble sentiment! The fact is that friendship can suffer from anemia unless

nourished with frequent and wholesome contacts.

Madeleine and Janet were separated when Madeleine's family moved away. The girls agreed not to let the separation destroy their friendship. Every week letters passed between them. They arranged to spend vacations together at each other's homes. That was several years ago. Today the girls are just as close friends as ever.

5.

Possessiveness is an ugly friendship illness. Like a parasite, it thrives by consuming the happy relationship to which it fastens itself. That's what happened in the case of Linda and Debby. Linda felt she had full ownership of Debby because they were best friends. She monopolized all her time. Other girls kept away from Debby because of Linda's hands-off attitude. Naturally Debby resented being left out of group fun. She thought of giving up the friendship. Her problem was that she loved Linda and knew she'd miss her terribly if their friendship was consumed. Finally, like a surgeon, she decided to use a sharp knife and cut out the dangerous possessiveness. The knife she used was frankness.

"Linda," she said one day, "I want us to be good friends always. But I want other friends. You should, too. I've decided that's the only way we can go on being friends."

The incision hurt. Linda was pained by Debby's thrust. She knew, though, that Debby always meant what she said. As time went on the addition of new blood in their relationship was stimulating. Both girls were happier. The parasite of possessiveness never got a foothold again.

6.

Imagination can easily put a friendship on the sick list. An imaginary illness can be a very serious thing! So it was with the friendship of Marlene and Rhoda. They were a very attractive pair, outstanding for neatness and good grooming. They loved clothes and knew how to wear them.

When Marlene's father was promoted to office manager, the family finances improved. Marlene was able to buy more and better clothes. She acquired five cashmere sweaters, while Rhoda had only one.

Rhoda began imagining that Marlene was now too high-toned to want to continue their friendship. When Marlene said she couldn't go somewhere, Rhoda took it as a deliberate slight. She had established in her mind the idea that Marlene didn't want to be seen with her any more. Marlene, on the other hand, was confused and hurt. Why was Rhoda giving her the go-by? She got the answer to the question one day when she called Rhoda and asked her to a party. Rhoda told her she couldn't come because she didn't have anything new to wear.

Marlene said, "Clothes are important Rhoda, but they are not what makes people want to be together."

Rhoda gasped into the phone, "Then it doesn't make any difference to you that I don't have a lot of clothes?"

"You always look nice," Marlene said. "But you silly goose, can't you get it into your head that it's not what you wear that makes you the ideal friend?" Rhoda never again let herself be taken in by imagined slights.

7.

Abuse is another friendship-wrecker. When you abuse health rules you have to pay the toll. If you don't clean your teeth you can expect cavities.

Philip and Don's friendship suffered abuse because Philip took undue advantage of it. He asked Don to fix his bike. He asked Don to mow his yard. He asked Don to sell his tickets for the junior high play.

Don, though always willing to do for others, tired of being imposed upon. Philip didn't realize how close he was to losing the best friend he ever had until the day he called Don and asked him to haul his record player downtown for repairs since Don "was going down anyway."

"Oh, no! Not again!" Don moaned.

Philip was struck as if a firecracker had exploded in his face. That moan dashed him into realizing how much he had imposed in the past—how great his abuse had been.

He began to do his share in all the things in which he and Don participated.

8.

Puffed up feelings of personal importance make an invalid of friendship. Trying to impress a friend had an ill effect.

Michael admired Paul so very much that he was anxious to have him return the feeling. Michael tried to accomplish this by constantly blowing his own horn.

"I got five A's on the last five themes I handed in," he boasted. And he made such statements as, "Everyone says I'm going to be the star of the basketball team because I can hit those baskets." Or "Look at my muscles. I can lift heavier weights than anyone in our class."

Paul listened, but instead of being impressed, he felt billious. Michael was smart enough to sense Paul's negative reaction to his bragging and stopped.



Yes, it's sad to see friendship sicken from rivalry, jealousy, misunderstanding, separation, possessiveness, imagination, abuse, or egotism! If you have a friendship that's suffering from any of these, hurry to its bedside, diagnose the bug that's causing the trouble, apply the medicine quickly, and—presto! its life will be saved!

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Members of the league will find this topic loads of fun. It's fitted perfectly for socio-drama. Present the introductory paragraphs, listing on the board causes of sick friendships. Then have someone help you act out each problem. Ask for leaguers to identify the illness. Ask for suggestions on curing the illness. After suggestions have been given, act out the cure.

Type or mimeograph check lists for everyone. Let them fill them out at the end of the meeting and ask them to take their lists home to think about. The lists should include all the illnesses presented in the topic. A space following each illness allows room to place a check mark if the person feels he is guilty of that in his friendship.

CREEDS—Cont. from page 3

was *only* human; others said He was *only* divine. We believe, however, that He was perfectly human and perfectly divine. Both of these "natures" were complete in Him. He actually lived on the earth and died, as the Son of God and Son of Man, for "our salvation."

To Summarize

There they are—the three basic CREEDS of our church. They express what we believe. Why do we have them? We have them because they show the way of true faith in Christ and of our salvation.

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Refer to the topic on the Apostles' Creed in the last HIGH IDEALS, page 46.

Begin this topic with a brief review of the Trinity and the Apostles' Creed. Each person should have a copy of all three. The Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are found in the "Common Service Book" or the "Christian Youth Hymnal." Have the church secretary mimeograph copies of the Athanasian Creed. Your pastor will have a copy of it in his "Book of Concord."

Now use the material on these pages and the discussion questions as a guide for your own thought-through topic.

DISCUSSION

Why do we have the Creeds? How is the Christian belief different from others? How are the three Creeds of our church similar to each other? Who are the "saints?" Who are the "quick?" Why was the Nicene Creed written? Why is its name not entirely correct? What is its main use? Why? What is stressed in the second article? What do we mean when we say, "one baptism for the remission of sins?" Give another name for the Athanasian Creed. How was it used in the beginning? How many parts does it have? What are they? What are the two "natures" of Christ?

PRAYER—cont. from page 43

on by faith until things are made clear to us. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Give the short introduction. Then ask the leaguers why it seems that prayers are unanswered sometimes. Discuss reasons given and present material in topic.

Echoes

There are plenty of activities in which you can participate in the coming months. Here are several suggestions. Some of the topics contain party or project ideas. And you will have plenty more tricks up your sleeves.

OCTOBER

1. Start now to make scrap books for shut-ins of your church. Collect beautiful pictures, poems, prayers, etc.

2. Have each leaguer bring one item—canned fruit or vegetables. Give these to a church institution near you.

3. Plan a Hallowe'en party for the local children's home.

4. Read to the blind members of your congregation or community.

5. Remember the members of your congregation who are in college or in the armed forces. Keep them posted on things back home by having each leaguer adopt one to whom he can write.

NOVEMBER

1. Write your own Thanksgiving Proclamation.

2. Write a Thanksgiving service of dedication. Invite your parents.

3. Make a league "Thanksgiving Prayer Book." Each leaguer should write his own prayer of thanks. These are compiled and put in the league library for regular use.

4. Have one of your talented woodworkers design and make a thankoffering box for the league. Each Sunday bring a thankoffering. A year from now use it with a special service of dedication for some worthy cause (Lutheran World Action, Lutheran World Relief, a missionary, etc.)

5. Attend the Thanksgiving service with your families or as a group of leaguers.

6. Prepare a Thanksgiving service and present it at a home for the aged.

7. Make favors for hospital trays.

8. Prepare Advent wreaths and serv-

ices. Distribute these to members of the congregation or to shut-ins.

DECEMBER

1. Write thank you notes to your pastor, Sunday school teacher, advisors, church council, etc., for their untiring guidance, leadership, and helpfulness throughout the year.

2. Shovel snow for older members of your congregation.

3. Carol in a hospital this year.

4. Visit your sick and shut-ins and have a prayer service. Take them a plan and meditation book.

5. Decorate your church for the Christmas services.

6. Present a Christmas play or pageant for the congregation.

7. Prepare a nativity scene in front of the church. If you do not have space, ask a neighboring store for a window which you can decorate for Christmas.

CAUTION

In all of these projects be sure to check the details with your pastor and advisors. In some cases you will need the permission of your church council.

Arrange plans with institutions. Consult them for ideas. Don't surprise them by just dropping in. You won't be welcome in this case. Be sure you know how many to prepare for, what to expect. Arrange the time carefully. Institutions have schedules they must keep, you know.

Be sure to plan far in advance, and carefully. Nothing is less fun than a hastily prepared project. Give your project plenty of thought and discussion.

Be sure you have the materials you need. Don't wait until the last minute to hunt pencils and paper. Have it in your meeting room. Be sure the cars are ready and waiting if you are traveling somewhere.

Remember, it's your responsibility to clean up after your activities. This means in your meeting room as well as institutions you may visit. Don't leave the leftover decorations for the nurses or housemothers to put away (unless they designate they would like the decorations to stay up longer).

THE LUTHER LEAGUE OF AMERICA

2900 QUEEN LANE

PHILADELPHIA 29, PENNSYLVANIA

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TERM 1957-61

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HIGH IDEALS TOPICS—1959

(subject to change)

WINTER

rededication
quiz—Church
qualifications of missionary
worship in Luther League
give up what for Lent?
American possessions
how many \$'s spell \$uce\$\$
Genesis Bible study
is conversion necessary?
family altar
Easter

SPRING

symbolism
symbolism of colors and numbers
Elijah
plan for college?
life of the Galilean
watch your figures
chronology of the Bible
ascension
Whitsunday
belief of Jews
summer dating
diaconate
recreation

SUMMER

church needs writers
Moses
little things mean a lot
face lifting of family
personality development
why is life worth living?
Jesus prayed
mountain top experiences
hymns of brotherhood
put out your welcome mat
five-point program
how to lead a topic
choir

FALL

institutions of the Church
cheating
what Catholics believe
Martin Luther
saints
stewardship
thanks-living
advent wreath
David
what does God expect of you?
Advent
Christmas—family affair
winter dating